# Form And Meaning In Euro-American Drama

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# Introduction

Situated within the Euro-American context of drama and composed of various portions of academic papers the author published in academic journals, this book is meant to introduced students of English literature of Euro-American drama with the aim of pinpointing the inseparability of form and meaning for the purpose of producing the required dramatic effects.

Chapter One deals with dramatic form and society with particular reference to popular forms in John Arden and Margaretta D'Arcy's community drama. The Ardens adopt such traditional English forms as music hall, folk poetry, gypsy clothes, songs and masks to discuss topical themes about today's world. The chapter also tackles expressionism in Elmer Rice's The Adding Machine and Arthur Miller's Death of A Salesman, with the aim of discussing the negative impact of American capitalism on man and how it pawned and belittled man's capability of improvement.

Chapter Two discusses silence as theme and technique and how it is dealt with in drama. It is discussed with particular reference to Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot and Harold Pinter's The Caretaker. The Chapter proceeds, through comparison and analysis, to expound the ontological and Beckettian dramatic world as well as Pinter's social concept of silence and its dramatic signification.

This is done through treating the historical, philosophical and dramatic implications of such tacit features as pauses, dots, repetitions and ellipses.

Chapter Three deals with farce in drama, tracing its origin and usage as a theatrical form of expression. It also stresses how farce, which has been historically devalued, is used in modern drama to tackle such societal themes as marital crises and family problems. Practically, farce is discussed in relation to Alan Aykbourn's The Norman Conquests trilogy to discuss themes of universal appeal.

This chapter also tackles theatrical technical devices of utopian literature in connection with Arnold Wesker's Chicken Soup Trilogy. To pinpoint Wesker's utopian vision, such theatrical devices as flashbacks versus flash forwards, debates and constant jumps into the future are implemented.

Chapter four discusses the image in drama with particular reference to the image of the sea in Henrik Ibsen's The Lady from the Sea and Eugene O'Neill's Anna Christi.

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# Chapter I

# Dramatic Form and Society

The main objective of this chapter is Twofold. First :tracing the dramatic implications of form in the theatre and their effective role in the process of social change with reference to three community plays by John Arden and Margaretta D'Arcy. Second dealing with expressionism in the American theatre with special reference to Elmer Rice's The Adding Machine and Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman.

The Ardens' plays which are characterized by the community spirit are The Business of Good Government (1960), "Ars Longa, Vita Brevis" (1964) and The Royal Pardon (1967). They were composed with the aim of linking art with life and previous historical facts with actual social, cultural and political happenings of today's world. The treatment of popular forms is done through analysis, interpretation and discovery of the Ardens' concept of the community play, of popular forms and of how these forms are subjected so serve social, political and cultural themes.

From 1960 onwards, and due to their rejection of the conditions imposed upon the contemporary theatre, both John Arden and his wife Margaretta D'Arcy began to experiment with forms outside the contemporary theatrical conventions. Instances of these popular forms are music hall, folk poetry, ancient Irish heroic legends, ballads and folk songs.

To emphasize his great interest in introducing popular forms in the plays which are called Community drama, Arden expressed his intention to establish a free public entertainment in his house at Kirbymoorside where he lived for some time. His wife participated in writing the community plays and took full responsibility for their production. Arden states that "no specific form of entertainment is at present envisaged but it is hoped in the course of it the forces of Anarchy, Excitement and expressive energy latent in the most apparently sad persons shall be given release" (Arden, 1963, 17).

To trace popular forms in three community plays written by Arden in collaboration with Margaretta D'Arcy ; The Business of Good Government (1960), "Ars Longa, Vita Brevis" (1964) and The Royal Pardon (1967), the following questions are set with a view to find their answers in the course of the chapter : What is a community play ? Is it written to "develop a disappearing sense of community" as Simon Trussler claims (1969, 182)? Or is it attempted to "focus on the conflicts and contradictions" of society as Albert Hunt elucidates (1974, 106) ? And what are the specific popular forms used by the Ardens in their new community plays?

In their preface to The Hero Rises up, Arden and D'Arcy define the community play as follows :

> We hoped to write a play which need not be done properly. That is to say : we wanted to produce it ourselves so that it would present the audience with an experience akin to that of running up in a crowded wet street on Saturday night against a

> drunken re-nosed man with a hump on his back dancing in a puddle, his arms around a pair of bright-eyed laughing girls, his mouth full of inexplicable loud noises. ... You don't at once forget him : and although you know nothing about him, he has become some sort of circumstance in your life (1965, 5-6).

Popular forms that are used in the Ardens' community plays include, according to Hunt, music hall and folk poetry as in The Business of Good Government; a kind of language is used to provide the authors, through the use of juxtaposition technique, with the opportunity to compare and contrast the traditional with the new, the use of the gypsy clothes, of the songs and of the masks and clowns in "Ars Longa, Vita Brevis" and the manipulation of clowns, villagers and masks in The Royal Pardon in which the cultural and political confrontation between the English and the French is felt.

The Ardens' community plays need consciousness of the audiences to see the play, not starting to judge it from a certain social standpoint, but rather their judgement should be implied in their criticism of such dramatic elements as character, themes and the technique of the play. In this respect, Arden, in his article "Telling True Tale" states:

> Social criticism.. tends in the theatre to be dangerously ephemeral and therefore disappointing after the fall of the curtain. But if it is expressed within the framework of the traditional poetic truths

> it can have a weight and an impact derived from something more than documentary facility (1960, 125).

The conflict between authority and anarchy represents the pivotal dramatic theme in almost all of Arden's works. Imbued with that sense of liberty, anarchy and justice, and irritated by the lukewarm reception of the audiences, the Ardens collaborated to experiment on a new type of theatre which depends on popular forms and treats topical events and occasional situations. This form of theatre is represented in the community plays. In this connection, Arden illustrates the function of these plays :

> What I am deeply concerned with is the problem of translating the concrete life of today into terms of poetry that shall at one time both illustrate that life and set it within the historical legendary tradition of our culture (125).

Community plays require amateurs and improvisation groups to add from their own experiences both to the Ardens' open texts and to the actual performance. To emphasize that point, Roy Nevit pinpoints the nature of characters in a community play and how the audience could compose an action group in the community play :

> A local audience responds to the speech rhythms and patterns in the dialogue, acknowledges the characters as legitimate representations of the people they know, and expounds to the celebratory nature

> of the events depicted which give public manifestation of matters which feel important to them and to the place where they live (1986, 11).

Margaretta D'Arcy helped a great deal in the production of these plays and in making them successful. In his "Author's Note" to his book, Arden: A Study of his Plays, Hunt emphasizes the functional role played by D'Arcy in collaboration with Arden in writing and producing their community plays :

> Margaretta D'Arcy's influence on Arden's work has not been confined to offering ideas and collaborating on the writing. She has been the driving force behind experiments in which he has been involved outside the professional theatre (1974, 11-12).

Community plays have always been misunderstood and Arden expresses his own experience in experimenting with that form :

> I have found in my own very tentative experiments that audiences (and particularly critics) find it hard to make the complete simple response to the story that is the necessary preliminary to apparently the meaning of the play (1960, 128).

However, these experiments reveal a social content and are essentially directed to have their impact upon the entire community rather than treat mere abstract moral and human values. In this respect, Freidstein states that Arden, together with such playwrights as Osborne, Bond and Stoppard, managed to :

> Compel their readers and audiences to believe in the power of the word and the power of art; and providing convincing evidence that the writer possesses a great power to influence human hearts and minds, they oblige their fellow-countrymen to look around them and think about a great deal (1982, 468).

To theatrically express their aims, the Ardens resort, in handling their theatrical technique, and in manipulating their themes, to the old tradition of the ballad and ancient Irish legends. "The ballad tradition", Arden states, "is the one that will always in the end reach the heart of the people, even if the people are not entirely aware of what it is that causes their response" (Arden 1969, 5-6).

In addition to their use of theatrical tradition, the Ardens use old literature as a source of themes for their creative faculties. It is via their imagination which operates in harmony with their social and political goals that Arden and D'Arcy succeeded in establishing the form of community drama.

Some of the traditional themes used by Arden are worth mentioning in this respect.

> A pregnant girl is abandoned by her lover – a soldier is recruited for the war... a sailor is returned from the sea finds his wife re-married ... The Turkish Knight kills St. George, only to find an interfering

> doctor who raises him from the dead again. (1960, 128).

These themes and many others have great fascination to dramatists who find in them a rich source of inspiration.

To maintain their sense of liberty, the Ardens started to develop their theatrical technique, depending mainly on amateurs and improvisation groups, to encourage the majority of communities to participate actively in the performance without imposing upon them certain rules, but rather to live the atmosphere of the play and to contribute from their own life experiences. However, improvisation has its theatrical conditions. In this connection, Katharine Worth states:

> The improvisation is both free and bound: free in the sense that many techniques are open to the actors; bound in the sense that they are confined by their subject-matter, the fact of history. Every scene should be documented by primary sources no recorded messages. It must he built on primary sources. (1973, 121).

In The Business of Good Government, a nativity play written to be performed at the church of St. Michael, Brent Knoll village, Somerset, Arden with the help of Arnold Wesker, who regarded Arden, but rather indirectly, as a "paralyzed liberal," (Trussler, 182) succeeded in bringing about the forces of anarchy, excitement and expressive power inherent in, people and enables them to defy authority.

In his choice of people who did not experience acting before, Arden in his Preface to the play expounds that the choice of amateurs

and improvisation groups is aimed at to build up characters capable of achieving progression and creativity through the use of their own language in their own way. Arden explicates.

> We concentrated on bringing out the meaning of their lines until without entirely realizing it, they created from their own personalities a character, completely natural, belonging both to their own experience and to the world of the play (1963. 1).

In The Business of Good Government, the Ardens' social, historical and political vision is quite conspicuous. The themes are represented through traditional Christian Carols a nativity scene, also, the folk songs sung by the shepherds throughout the play provide a popular pastoral atmosphere. The Ardens manage to "unite the homely and the mysterious without strain" (Gooder, 1968, 229). For instance, Mary sings just before the child is born:

What we have made
We learn to leave alone.
What we know now
From now we must live unknown.
Good bye, good bye.
I have come to let you go (29).

In his article "Political Progress of a Paralyzed Liberal: The Community Dramas of John Arden, Simon Trussler observes that these plays do not show a drastic transition from the professional plays, but they were written "rather to develop a disappearing sense of community than to put across a particular message" (182). This viewpoint is

criticized by Albert Hunt who claims that these plays are not so much interested in conveying a certain message as with pointing out "conflicts and contradictions" prevalent in society. Nevertheless, the two viewpoints complement each other, for, in order to stress the conflicts and contradictions of the localities in which these plays are performed, the Ardens seek to gather the members of community under one umbrella via establishing that form of theatre to dramatize their consciousness and set them in commotion and anarchy to defy authority. To achieve that end, the Ardens' characters are dominated by certain social and political views through which they tend to change and uproot the social and political follies of their community. In this regard, Friedstein asserts:

> The central figures in Arden's plays are people of remarkable passion and integrity, ready to sacrifice everything - even their own lives - in the name of an idea, of what they regard as justice and the lofty ideals of humanism (1982, 438).

In The Business of Good Government, the juxtaposition technique is employed to clarify and judge the present in relation to the past. For instance, when Angel says, "There were shepherds, abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night, the young shepherd says, "Ah, and a cold night, you should say that" (1963, 22). The shepherds, through their folk songs and folk poetry, throw a certain colouring of popularity over the play. They sing a beautiful lullaby, full of allusions to the mission of Christ. They believe that the second coming of Christ

will save the world from poverty, coldness and danger. The Old Shepherd sings:

I came to town to see my true love,
But 1 found her gone and far away
Deluded by an Irish sailor
Who took her off on a rainy day (25)

Then, he addresses the Old Shepherd:

To buy a pair of red leather boots
A wide black hat and a new blue jacket (25).

And the Young Shepherd sings:

If you lend him six pence
I swear to you you'll soon regret it, (25)

To introduce, through the popular forms, the themes of birth, growth and death, Arden and D'Arcy make use of folk poetry. The Old Shepherd sings quietly to the baby, while his mother Mary takes some rest:

> Go to sleep little baby, and then you will see. How strong grows the acorn on the branches of the tree. How tightly it lives in the green arid the brown. But the strong storms of Autumn will soon shake it down. The deeper it falls then tire stronger will it lower. Bold roots anti wide limbs and a true heart of power (33-34).

In their delineation of the central figure, King Herod, the Ardens make use of the medieval mystery play, But unlike the mystery play

where Herod appears as a demon king, in The Business of Good Government, Herod appears as "an intelligent politician trying to make the best of an impossible situation (Hunt, 1974, 112).

The Ardens' protagonist is not a prevalent figure in the play, yet his decision to slaughter the innocent children is the central motif. He chooses to do so for human reasons, namely, to protect the people of this country. The play opens with the proclamation of Angel to set the message:

> Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy which shall he unto all people. Glory to Cod in the highest and on earth peace, good will towards men. 18)

Herod enters rapidly and immediately to agree with the principle Angel initiates :

> Good will, great joy, peace upon earth - I do nut believe they are all together possible. But it is the business of good government to try and make them possible (18).

Herod regrets the notion of choosing west over east, Rome over Persia, for political alliance. It is an obligation, he has to carry out, because Rome controls Egypt and Egypt controls his food supply. It is a plain fact that exists in the politics of the world today. Meanwhile, The three Wise Men come from Persia searching for a royal child. If they find him, he could become a Persian rival to the Roman supported King. Here, Herod the senses danger, that this situation would result in the threat of the Roman order. He says:

> I am not primarily concerned with my own personal fortunes. The object of my life is the integrity of my Kingdom.. What am I to do? (40).

Herod finds that the only alternative to good will and great joy is to kill the innocent children, although, he knows that by doing so, he says, "I am putting a very particular mark against my name in the history books" (50) It is a tragic necessity that the honour of one man should vanish for the purpose of public good. Herod's situation would probably remind us of the situation of Brutus in relation to the assassination of Caesar in <u>Julius Caesar</u>.

Unlike the Greek authors and unlike Shakespeare, the Ardens do not make use of the Greek mythology, but instead they used their own sense of time. In this regard,' Ann P. Messenger states that Arden:

> uses his sense of time and of historical process within time, his knowledge of past events and of present conditions and of universal political realities, to create a public structure (1972, 308).

Introducing Arden and talking about his writing of <u>The Business of Good Government</u>, Simon Trussler states:

> Arden has never followed the easy line of sneering at Christianity for its established humbug while ignoring its moral implications, but more important, the title of the Christmas play goes to heart of his current preoccupation .... The problems examined in

> the grotesque comedies were social and particular (1965, 7)

"Ars Longa, Vita Brevis", another community drama, mainly directed for school children, contributed to the Royal Shakespeare's "'Theatre of Cruelty" season at the Lamda Theatre in 1963. It owes a great deal to the absurdist playwrights as well as to the French Surrealist poet, actor and director, Antonin Artaud who regrets the absence of the theatre in the true sense of the word. However, he finds a sense of hope in the revival of the theatre on condition that:

> Everything that acts is a cruelty. It is upon the idea of extreme action, pushed beyond all limits, that the theatre must be rebuilt (1953, 93).

Artaud proceeds in his treatment of the "Theatre of Cruelty" to say:

> The theatre will never find itself again... except by furnishing the spectator with the truthful precipitate of dreams, in which his taste for crime, his erotic obsessions, his savagery, chimeras, his utopian sense of life and matter, even his cannibalism pour out on a level not counterfeit and illusory, but interior (93).

When in an interview, Simon Trussler asked Arden about "Ars Longa, Vita Brevis", Arden answered:

> Having accepted, rather casually, a commission to write a piece for school children, I was at a loss until Margaretta D'Arcy reminded me of a curious inquest, reported in The Times, held on an art master

> shot in a wood while taking part in a territorial Army exercise. Peter Brook then asked me for his Theatre of Cruelty program, and we thought we would kill two birds with one stone (Trussler, 1966, 51).

Various aspects of popular forms appear in "Ars Longa, Vita Brevis", in the opening popular speech of the headmaster, in the use of local gypsy clothes, in the songs and masks. The central figure is an art master who desires to be a soldier and who always confuses art with battles. In a sense, the drama corresponds to children's lives and their interest in imitating their school teachers. "Community Theatre ", Roy Nevitt states, "connects life with art, and history with present day." (1986, 11)

On directing "Ars Longa, Vita Brevis" with a group of students from an art college, Albert Hunt states:

> What 1 found particularly exciting was the way understanding grew out of the actual work on "Ars Longa". We'd begun with a pretty crude idea of sending up the establishment - someone had stolen one of those Churchill posters to use in the funeral scene at the end. 1 never needed to tell them that this wasn't the way the play was going at all. In working, they discovered this for themselves (1965, 27).

Thus, a great deal of improvisation has been done on the part of the actors without interference from the director, to present, via funny scenes, such serious themes as art, war and education. In a sense, the play provides a summary of Arden's work up-to-date.

The first scene opens with the headmaster's formal speech-day. He begins by praising the last Year school activities, and Arden here, ironically criticizes the school system:

> It has been a very good year and we have all made a lot of money and 1 think we may safely congratulate ourselves upon that very good. Now what has not been so good? Football, successful hockey successful; cricket successful school orchestra both successful and harmonious, school meals excellent - I have even eaten some of them myself (Arden, 1964, 13).

Through this community act on the part of the headmaster and from his annual speech, it seems, ironically speaking, that nothing has been unsuccessful in the system of school.

Scene two introduces, through an interview between the headmaster and the Art Master, a plain image of a rigid and fascist art master who is sick with discipline. When the headmaster asks him about his views concerning education and the curriculum, he answers:

A.M.: No free expression

H,M. : None ?

A.M.: Not to start with. Highly perilous.
undesirable. loosens, weakens, disintegrates,
softens the foundations, carries away the metal
fibre, shreds it, unravels it, scatters it abroad.

H.M.: I am very glad to hear you say so. Just why I
myself have always held. Discipline
essential (15).

On ironically criticizing the dogmatic and stagnant system of education, especially art education, Arden makes the headmaster approve to the Art Master's system of education and his method of teaching his pupils.

In scene three, to dramatize the teacher - students' relationships through popular forms, the students enter with masks and false noses, wearing their robes over blue jeans and basket-ball boots. The class turns into a carnival scene and zany situations. The Art Master begins immediately his lesson rather in a rigid and strict manner. He informs his students as follows:

> I want an absolute accuracy. Precise with your rulers, and your T. squares. No free hand, no expressionism, impressionism, conservatism the only permissible abstraction, but realism the keynote (15).

In scene four, which takes place at the Art Master's house, the Art Master regrets the very notion that he got married because this deprived him of being enlisted as a soldier : "Had I not married you, I would have submitted myself to the glories of discipline and the beautiful discomforts of Khaki Serge (18).

The Art Master's wife stands in a paradoxical situation to his rigidity. She is a very sexy woman who rejects the straight lines and the

rigidity of her husband. She prefers the easy way of enjoying herself with food and drink and youngmen in fast cars. In scene seven, Arden criticizes the poor pay of the teaching profession in the words of Mrs. Miltiodes : when offered the moving as a compensation for her husbands death, she says : Thank you very much (20).

In the funeral scene, she expresses her pity for him, even though, she refuses his way of life. She expresses her ambivalent attitude towards her husbands :

> I shed a tear upon his bier. Because to me he was ever dear. But I could not follow him in all his wishes. I prefer the quick easy swimming of fishes which sport and play. In green water all day. And have not a straight line in the whole of their bodies (20).

Of the paradoxes in the play, Hunt explains that they have emerged in action to express" both the pity and the rejection. Just as, when the art master is shot, you have to show both the comedy of the shooting and the reality of death" (1965, 29).

When, in an interview, Simon Trussler asked Arden : "Why do you think the majority of critics still seem unable to respond to your work"? Arden answered :

> I am as dissatisfied with my work as the critics .... My aims are at the moment invariably larger than my achievements, but I do not see this as a good ground for despondency. I like to think that for each

> subject I have handled I have tried to find an appropriate style : the theatre should not be a place where one carried about brand images (1966, 51).

This interview reveals Arden's motivation behind his attempts, in collaboration with his wife, to write community plays that depend a great deal on amateurs and improvisations for the purpose of appealing to a wider audience with different levels of consciousness.

In their Note to The Royal Pardon, the Ardens speak about the source and the nature: of the play:

> The play had its origin in a series of bed-time stories told to our own children (aged 2-6) but we intended the dramatized version to be for a somewhat older-age group ... it is acted with conviction and with a proper sense of communication between performers and audiences (1967, 7).

As in The Business .of Good Government and "Ars Longa, Vita Bervis", popular forms in The Royal Pardon are used to clarify themes, characters and conflict. Such popular forms as songs, clowns and the chorus are used with immediacy to express the Ardens' attitudes towards politics, war and the establishment. In this connection J.L. Styan raises the importance of songs and masks in dramatic action:

> .... Songs are inserted with such frequency that they no longer seem merely to break realistic illusion, but to be the norm of the convention. As in the music hall tradition, they lend an ironic impersonality to

> the characters who sing them, but also, in spite of this, an immediacy of the whole performance (199).

Styan expounds the dramatic function of the mask. He states that "the mask is most powerful catalyst, even today, and it returns style to the theatre as soon as it appears" (112).

The Royal Pardon opens with an unseen group of actors singing:

> Sun and moon and stars and rainbow
> Drum, and trumpet, tambourine,
> A greedy king or haughty beggar
> A virgin slut or a painted queen
> put your boots on, mask your faces
> Heave your cloaks and swing your swords,
> Laugh and weep and stamp with anger
> Kick your jigs and strut the boards,
> All is painted, all is cardboard,
> Set it up and fly it away.
> The truest word is the greatest falsehood,
> Yet all is true and all in play (Arden and D'Arcy, 1967, 11),

In the opening scene, which obviously reveals the Ardens' aim of attacking falsehood and artificiality and seeking for truth via the masks, false ones and other theatrical conventions, the clown enters followed by the Dragon (a girl in disguise). The actors are invited to act the story of George and the Dragon. To popularize the scene, the Ardens communicate with the children in the audience, playing games with them and involving them in action.

The themes of love, marriage and other social forms which are represented in The Royal Pardon, are expressed through farce. In this respect, Styan stresses the importance of farce:

> The farther drama leans towards farce or tragedy, the more the actor assumes the "mask". It leads impersonality to the experience, frees the spectator from the need to sympathize, frees him to laugh, all without the tiresome restrictions of everyday life (1975, 82).

To throw light on the strange social scene and to criticize the miserable social conditions Esmeralda sings:

> Close the show, we're a lousy lot of layabouts,
> Close the show, we're obstructing in the street,
> Our jokes are blue, our noses too,
> Our cash is few, we've stinking feet
> Arden and D'Arcy, 1967, 42).

Commenting on the theatrical conventions of The Royal Pardon, Hunt writes:

> Throughout the play they (the Ardens) offer the same kind of incongruous, but accurate images. So, the constable approaches Luke very formally and politely .... The language is mock-legalistic-but the constable punctuates it by punching Luke in thee stomach, hitting him across the neck, and twisting his arms against his back (42).

In that strange world of The Royal Pardon, which provides an opportunity for a child's-eye view of what a policeman arresting a criminal is like, and for the adults to comment on social and political scenes, we observe many comic and entertaining situations. The arrest of Luke, the use of the gags and the threat of the constable by the old wooden swords of the prince are funny and zany situations, yet they imply quite serious social and political themes that rotate round the confrontations between the English and the French.

Of the nature of dramatic action in a community drama, Roy Nevit states:

> The action can move from England to France and back and can cover five years in under three hours. Many characters can be introduced. The source material is transmuted into theatrical and musical forms without loss of authenticity (1986, 11).

Popular songs are used as special tools to convey the Ardens' attitudes towards such social themes as hunger, poverty, money making, marriage and love. Concrete examples of these themes are found in the play. Esmeralda sings to raise the subject of hunger:

> I stand alone against the world on two extended feet:
> I need no help from anyone
> To save me from defeat,
> Except a hammer, and a nail,
> And timber all complete:
> Oh please dear, could you find far me
> A piece of cake to eat. (Arden and D'Arcy, 1967, 42).

The English King's attitude towards art exemplified in the theatre is ironically represented when he says:

> We have seen a great many plays in a great many days. We didn't like any of them at all.... None of them were funny and there were very few beautiful actresses-which is the only sort of thing I enjoy in the theatre (50).

The opening chorus of act two reveals, at a certain distance, the attitude, not only of the English, but also of humanity at large towards social injustice exemplified in low wages. On their way to France, the actors paid only three and four pence per head, whereas the constable who is travelling to arrest the deserter, Luke, is paid fifty guineas:

> For travelling expenses three and four pence per head (Rowing over the Sea to France)
> They would pay more to the grave diggers when we are dead. (If it blows up a gale we haven't a chance).
> (Rowing over the sear to France)
> But he couldn't be bothered to see if it would float
> (If it blows up a false we haven't a chance) (59).

The English actors who passed through a competition with the French actors succeed in their performance before the King of France and they win the prize of one hundred guineas. The emphasis on improvisation in performance, would result in fantastic conclusions, Arden and D'Arcy make Luke, who is not a professional actor, perform the play while the other actors are doped by the French to upset their performance.

Talking about the climax of The Royal Pardon, Albert Hunt explains:

> The Ardens explore the various levels of illusion in an extraordinary complex way. The constable, in his search for Luke, has disguised himself as a gendarme, and he comes upon the princess, who is laughing hysterically at he failure of the French play. The constable decides that she is Luke, disguised as a princess (1974, 123)

Popular forms, which are used to convey certain social and political themes are represented in the use of magic, gorgons which are Greek, in origin, and of cardboards as swords. They are used to create dramatic situations to convey such themes about law and order. Also, in comic sense, Luke talks about the war in Flanders and the difficulties they met there such as the lack of money and starvation.

In spite of the constant wars and disputes between the English and the French, the Ardens want to say that, through art, war and violence could be stopped. This is clearly expressed in the words of the French actress who states:

> ... how delightful it is for brother and sister artists to meet together in such amity after so cruel and so prolonged a period of Warl Is it not that the only true temple of peace and good will amongst mankind is nothing but the theatre...? (64)

In The Royal Pardon, the victory of anarchy over authority represented the thesis of the play. This theme is crystallized in the final song of the constable that ends the play:

> It is no use to be a policeman
> The force of anarchy wins all the time:
> I did not like it so I called it crime.
> With a truncheon and a brace of handcuffs
> 1 did my best for order and law:
> I was overwhelmed by such loose behavior.
> Such goings – on I never saw (109).

Thus, the great interest in the English popular tradition and its adaptations to the treatment of topical themes about today's world reflects the Ardens' profound interest in the lives of people, living in popular localities, with the aim of changing and developing their social, economic, artistic and political conditions. The use of popular forms to write community plays about common people living in isolated localities, provides the opportunity for the Ardens to achieve, in more concrete and actual way, the social and political role of literature exemplified in their community plays. The special aim is to change and develop community.

Expressionism in the American Theatre came as a natural output of the socio-economic and political conditions of the American society in the 1920's and 1940's. The advent of the Great Depression with its concomitants of socioeconomic stringencies that followed the First World War and the lag of the American cultural activities due to mechanization and automation resulted in the dramatic upsurge of a new

type of drama known as expressionism. The ceaseless search for unorthodox subject-matter and for revolutionary technique that would viably express the radical changes in shape and character of the American society is traceable in postwar American drama.

According to The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, the permutation of expressionism from the field of art in general to the field of literature in particular implies certain socio-economic and psychological themes.

> In forging a drama of social protest, Expressionist writers aimed to convey their ideas through a new style. Their concern was with general truths rather than with particular situations, hence they explored in their plays the predicaments of representative symbolic types rather than of fully individualized characters. Emphasis was laid not on the outer world, which is merely sketched in and barely defined in place and time, but on man's inner mental life; hence the imitation of life is replaced in Expressionist drama by the ecstatic evocation of states of mind (Goetz, 1989, 635)

The upsurge of expressionist drama as form and idea, is essentially associated with the dramatists' shying away from realism for it is mainly concerned with man's objective reality discarding his inner life, thus cutting off the lines of communication between external reality and his subconscious. This state results in man's alienation and isolation.

Freudian psychology led to the study of man's inner world; his fears, his anxieties and his constant sense of guilt. By implication man's miserable conditions due to living in the nightmarish world of machine necessitates a dramatic interpretation via a subjective dramatic method availed by expressionism. Man, according to Rice :

> ... was in the grip of forces beyond his control or even his knowledge. His conscious thoughts and behaviour, far from being the product of his judgment and free will, were compelled by fears, desires, anxieties, guilt feelings, repressions and experiential conditioning, usually below the level of consciousness and beyond the range of memory (1960, 122).

Such dramaturgic expressionist elements as songs, monologues, flashbacks, asides and soliloquies are signaled with a view to synthesize a working concept of expressionism that could be implemented to construe and interpret the plays.

The attitude of the playwright of the forties, (the modern playwright in Gascoigne's sense), towards the individual and society is in a sense, different from that of the playwright of the twenties. Gascoigne explains :

> The modern playwright feels himself inside the society he is writing about; the fears and frustrations of his characters are his own, or even if he does not share them he can sympathize with them. In contrast

> to this, the playwright of the twenties was an excluded and superior person looking from the outside into a world which he hated. His characters were conceived as symbols of society in its decay and they remained gruesome puppets (49).

Although Rice and Miller adopted the expressionist method to reveal man's inner world with the purpose of revealing the inner workings of his mind, their delineation of characters is, to some extent, different. Willy Loman, though his name implies his inferior position (Low man), is an individual, whereas Mr. Zero is a mere formless figure. Rice's and Miller's portrayal of hero's and Willy's alienated conditions focuses on the vivid expressionistic representation of their living under the huge machinery of the American capitalist society.

To rescue modern man from living in the insane capitalist society is to look for panaceas for his socio-economic and cultural problems with the aim of liberating him from being employed as a kind of commodity reduced into abstract figures. In this respect, Erich Fromm defines the sane society as that "which members have developed their reason to that point of objectivity which permits them to see themselves, others, nature, in their true reality and not distorted by ... paranoid hate" (1971, 357).

According to Fromm, as long as we can suggest, plan, consult and find out other alternatives, "we are in reach of achieving a state of humanity which corresponds to the vision of our great teachers" (363). Fromm envisages other forces than capitalism and communism that put

man in a perplexed situation. At the same time, he must choose. Fromm comments :

> Man today is confronted with the most fundamental choice; not that between capitalism or communism, but between robotism (of both the capitalist and the communist variety) or Humanistic Communitarian Socialism. Most facts seem to indicate that he is choosing robotism, and that means, in the long run, insanity and destruction (363).

Having the flexible forms of expressionism, the expressionist dramatists employ their imaginative faculties, not to depict man's social external reality which was the major concern of the realists, but they depict man's denizen world. Therefore, the playwright looked for appropriate dramatic devices. This search for expressionist devices necessitates amelioration in the dramatic medium. For instance, in expressionist drama personages are not presented in a straightforward manner, but delineated in an episodic shape, in form of a collage which is characterized by flexibility and by the sudden shifts forward and backward. This is the way Zero's and Loman's characters are presented.

Of the basic forms of expressionist drama, Mardi Valgemae states:

> Employing the magic of the forms, movements, sound, and colors of a stylized theatre, expressionism attempted to penetrate through life's surface reality and portray man's inner world. In order to

> present subjective states on the stage, a radical change in dramatic form became necessary. Techniques by which objectification is intensified through distortion resulted, and the consequent dream-like quality became one of the identifying characteristics of expressionist drama (1972, 2).

In expressionist drama, symbolism and inarticulations are basic features of the dramatic action. "Actions and objects", Valgemae argues, "were no longer viewed photographically but were seen symbolically and became abstractions or types" (12). The dramatic dialogue in expressionist drama has specific characteristics. It was "stripped of all but the essential words or was replaced by appropriate sound effects, including music, the most subjective of arts" (12).

Most important of the expressionistic manifestation are distortions, symbolism and inarticulation. In this respect, Fulton equates expressionism with suggestive and purposive distortions, for they widen the scope and provide the opportunity for the playwright to communicatively portray man's mental life. Distortions depict the subjective reality of characters and do away with the orthodox and rigid rules of realism.

Of the dramaturgic representation of expressionism on the stage, Fulton states :

> Expressionism is manifested in the theatre by a projection of the stage, from its conventional position behind the proscenium arch, to include the

> arch itself and even the auditorium. Thus theatrical illusion is broken down in a union of actors and audience symbolic of the dramatist's overstepping his medium (4-06).

The proscenium arch, the sound effects, the off stage thunder and red colour, sudden and swift revolving of the stage into moments of tension and violence are expressionistic manifestations in The Adding Machine and Death of A Salesman.

When in 1923, the year of composing his pioneering play, The Adding Machine, Rice was asked what is expressionism ? He answered (his answer is quoted in his book, The Living Theatre):

> It attempts to go beyond mere representation and to arrive at interpretation. The author attempts not so much to depict events faithfully as to convey to the sepectator what seems to be their inner significance. To achieve this end, the dramatist often finds it expedient to depart entirely from objective reality and to employ symbols, condensations and a dozen devices which to the conservative must seem arbitrarily fantastic (1960, 124).

In an interview with William Elwood two years before his death in 1967, Rice differentiates between the delineation of character in a realistic play and that character in an expressionist drama. He says :

> In the realistic play we look at the character from the outside – we see in terms of action and actuality, but

> in an expressionistic play we subordinate and even discard objective reality and seek to express the character in terms of his own inner life (Elwood, 1968, 2).

On referring to German expressionism and whether he is influenced by the Germans, Rice elucidates :

> I had no experience with German, expressionism at that time. In fact I think the only expressionistic play that had been done in this country was From Morn to Midnight, Kaiser's play, which the Theatre Guild, I believe, had done a year or two before. I did not see it. I was living in northern Connecticut at the same time and didn't see it. I didn't read it until after The Adding Machine was produced (1863, 3).

Historically, expressionism is a European movement. Its employment in the American theatre was very limited. "Its origin", Rice argues, "is usually traced to Frank Wedekind and Strindberg; but its emergence in Germany and in the United States after World War I can be attributed to Rebellion against Ibsenism ... and to the influence of Freudian psychology and the postwar social upheavals and to psychic dislocations" (Minority Report, (1981). Expressionist drama, according to Rice is not just intended to serve a particular cause, socio-economic or otherwise, but on the whole it seeks to establish a "social order" whose basic features are freedom and justice. In an article titled "project for a New Theatre", Rice sees that the theatre "would be an organ of propaganda only insofar as its general policy would favor the

establishment of a new social order in which existing economic and social injustice is eliminated" (1933, 1).

The pincipal aim of this section of the Chapter is to deal with two pioneering American expressionist dramatists that belong to the 1920s and the 1940s : Elmer Rice and Arthur Miller. The purpose is to trace the socio-economic and political conditions of the two different decades and how their oppressive impact upon the individual is expressionistically dramatized in two of their major plays : The Adding Machine (1923) and Death of A Salesman (1949).

Rice's and Miller's adoption of expressionist drama is in tune with the social and economic conditions of the capitalist society which pawned and belittled man in the machine age.

Man's mechanized conditions could be dovetailed into a moving and agitating theatrical framework represented by expressionism with a theatrical context capable, with its devices of symbols, distortions, abbreviations and monologues, of transcending the limits of verbal language to convey communicatively Rice's and Miller's apocalyptic visions of the automatic and robotization of the machine age. Expressing the human predicament due to industrialization and war, Rice states :

> The ever-accelerating pace of industrialization and the holocaust of the war had... dehumanized man and reduced him to the states of a replaceable cog in the industrial machine and an expandable unit in the war machine... (122).

Connected with the treatment of The Adding Machine and Death of A Salesman is the consideration of Rice's and Miller's attitudes towards the individual and society. The purpose is to gauge their dramatic motivations and aspirations in their attempts to employ expressionism. Reasons for the discussion of expressionism in two different historical periods are associated with certain historical, socio-economic and dramatic affinities that link the two plays. However, various differences between the two are discernable.

Considering the position of the individual in the drama of the forties, Bamber Gascoigne comments :

> ... the forties concentrated on the individual caught up in the action and the post-war theatre was left with all the emphasis on the individual because the action and the need for it, had passed... he is now pictured by the playwrights as a creature heavily pressed upon by family ties, by broad social forces and by a nagging sense of futility (48).

Such statements as "family" ties, "social forces and "a nagging sense of futility" constitute the entire fabric of Willy Loman's life in Death of A Salesman.

Whereas drama in the forties deals with individualized characters, in the twenties, drama treats typical figures. Nevertheless, similarities could be observed. "Both, Gascoigne asserts, "were postwar decades. Both saw unprecedented prosperity in certain quarters ... Each had an uneasy sense of being adrift on a sea of consumer goods" (48-9).

Thus, the influence of the socio-economic and political conditions of the twenties and the forties can overtly be traced in The Adding Machine and Death of A Salesman. To substantiate that point, Gascoigne states :

> Both plays are about little men who are tiny parts, indeed almost spare parts, of the huge machinery of capitalism. Both men are overwhelmed by their environment. Their attitudes, which are entirely shaped by their materialistic societies, are strongly criticized (49).

On rejecting the mechanized state of man which deprives him of his will and potentialities, Fromm states :

> ... in the process of an ... ever increasing mechanization of work... man himself became a part of the machine, rather than its master. He experienced himself as a commodity, as an investment; his aim became a success that is, to sell himself as profitably as possible in the market (355–6).

This is the case of Willy and Zero who are mechanized, regarded as commodities, reduced into mere figures, abstractified and finally fired by their employers after a very long time of service. However, Fromm, in his book The Fear of Freedom whose social themes, in many respects, are inspiring to the modern dramatists, suggests a solution for the human predicament. He writes :

> There is only one possible, productive solution for the relationship of individualized man with the world : his active solidarity with all men and his spontaneous, activity, love and work, which unite him again with the world, not by primary ties but as a free and independent individual (1980, 29).

Of the circumstances that led to the composition of The Adding Machine, Rice explains that "it's a unique experience, absolutely so. Never happened to me before or since" (3). And of the expressionist elements in The Adding Machine, Rice maintains that though expressionism is the dominant technical feature in the drama, "the first scene", says Rice," is really a realistic scene. It's just a woman talking to her husband" (1968, 5).

Capitalism is not merely confined to the exploitation of the various aspects of the socio-economic forces, but it extended to include the cultural life of the individual exemplified in art in general and in the American theatre in particular. Capitalists began to capitalize the theatre, thus dismantling it from its artistic and cultural values. According to Rice, the American theatre becomes "a business enterprise" (1960, 161).

Along with the other American playwrights of the 1920s who employed expressionism as an expedient of social protest, Rice meticulously epitomizes the tremendous impact of industrialization upon the individual. Capitalists exploit man and employ him as a cog in a machine and once, is not needed, he is fired. In this regard, Rebkin states:

> The villain became not the machine, but the owner of the machine, and mankind's victimization was seen, not as an immutable fact of the law of social evolution, but rather as the deliberate act of an exploiting class (274).

Among the major themes in The Adding Machine are man's loss of identity and the sickness of modern American society due to the feverish attachment to materialistic objects which hark back to automation and devouring mechanization. The play originally comprises eight scenes, but scene five was omitted in the first production of the play and it was until the 1956 Phoenix Theatre production of the play that scene five was added (Palmieri, 1980, 66).

The presentation of the names of the "dramatis personae" in figures is a verbal manifestation of expressionism and is in consistency with the materialistic aspects of the American society, a notion that reveals the hollowness and emptiness of figures devoid of will and freedom.

Discussing the production of The Adding Machine and the expressionist dramatic implication of its title and its dramaturgic significance, Valgamae comments :

> For the Guild Production, Lee Simonson designed a huge adding machine that dominated the stage, and Rice's stage directions call for the tape to assume menacing proprotions.... Zero thus symbolizes man in an ever-increasing mechanical society, void of

> identity and enslaved by the monster he has created (67).

Scene One opens with Mrs. Zero's monologues that reveals the domination of the American wife whose vitriolic nature is unbearable in every respect. It takes place in a room which resembles a cage and" lighted by a single naked bulb" (Valegmae, 64). Zero appears lying on bed, submissive and hollow. He can not interrupt his talkative wife.

The dramatic spectacle, in which the setting consists of walls which are "papered with sheets of foolscap covered with columns of figures" (Rice, 1950, 67) are consistent with the figures which run through Zero's mind. Expressionistically, the scene objectifies the robotized and mechanized world of the insane society Zero lies in.

Pondering on Zero's character and the nature of his relationship with his wife and commenting on the dramatic significance of the first scene, Palimeri states :

> ... Mr. Zero is obviously a beaten, unsuccessful man, completely under the domination of an over bearing wife...(He) is frequently the bult of his wife's acid comments, he never once interrupts (1980, 61).

Palmieri continued to maintain the irony of the scene and its consistency with the nature of the types. The discrepancies in the characters' behaviour due to their loss of touch with the self and consequently with reality are overtly expressed through irony. Palmieri comments :

> The irony involves the discrepancy between Mrs. Zero's purported predilection for movies that features "sweet little love stores" that are Drive and wholesome, "and her ugly love relationship with her husband engendered by her anything – but-sweet attitude towards him" (61).

Monotonous and boring life in the age of machine is expressionistically dramatized in the department store in which scene two vigorously takes place. Working as a book keeper and using an adding machine to count figures with the help of his assistant Daisy, Zero suffers a great deal from the mechanized life he experiences. Daisy's and Zero's repetitive use of figures and their speeches do imply the flickerings of their inner selves. Their speeches are incommunicable for each of them speaks in a different way. Their speeches, Palmieri states, "represent an externalization of their" thought processes. Undemanding and repetitious, their work frees their mind to dwell upon their inner conflicts" (62).

On his confrontation with his employer after twenty-five years of non-advance in his work, Zero is fired and the company replaced him by new adding machines. From the capitalist viewpoint, Zero is no longer of any use. Rice employs the distorted and abbreviated language which provides a meaningless and shapeless situations. Commenting on that scene of Zero's firing, Valgemae comments:

> Rice distorts even the language of the boss's apology, reducing it only to those words that penetrate into the dazed brain of Mr. Zero. "I'm

> sorry – no other alternative greatly regret – old employee – efficiency – economy business – business – Business – "(1972, 17).

To portray Mr. Zero's inner flickerings as a reaction to this unexpected firing, Rice employs such expressionist elements as light, music, rapid revolving of the platform and all the other physical paraphernalia of the theatre. When Zero heard the news of his firing, this dramatic situation is concretized through expressionist devices.

> Soft music is heard.... The part of the floor upon which the desk and stools are standing begins to revolve very slowly (76).

After hearing the final word from his boss, Zero's voice is "drowned by the music" (76). "The music swells and swells. To it is added every off stage effect of the theatre, the wind, the waves the galloping horses, the locomotive whistle, the sleigh bells, the automobile siren, the glass-crash." (76).

These expressionist manifestations merge idea with form to produce a total effect. Mr. Zero's depersonalized and dehumanized condition implies man's suffering under the shadow of capitalism with its concomitants of man's exploitation and degradation. Mr. Zero could be regarded as an archetype of "Everyman" suffering from the encroaching tools of materialism. Commenting on the boss's degradation of Zero, Palmieri states :

> Although Zero has been employed by the company for twenty – five years, the boss does not even know

> his name. Moreover, he shows little concern for the probable fate of a man discharged at an advanced age and on short notice (63).

Similar to Zero's mechanized and depersonalized situation are the robot-like guests who come to visit the Zeros. Their views on man, politics and woman reveal their narrowmindedness, their anger, racism and antagonism. In scene 3, the characters' ritualistic incantations which are presented in the following dialogue reveal their attitude towards man and life in general :

Three : I look for a big smash-up in about three months.

Two : Wouldn't surprise me a bit.

One : We're sure head in for trouble.

Mrs. six : My aunt has gallstones.

Mrs. Five : My husband has bunions.

Mrs. Four : My sister expects next month.

Mrs. Three : My cousin's husband has erysipelas.

Mrs. Two : My niece has st. Vitus's dance.

Mrs. One : My boy has fits.

Mrs. Zero : I never felt better in my life. Knock wood !

Six : Too damn much agitation, that's at the bottom of it.

Five : That's it ! Too damn many strikes.

Four : Foreign agitators, that's what it is.

Three : They ought to be run out a the country.

Two : What the hell do they want anyhow ?

One : They don't know what they want, if you ask me.

Six : America for the Americans is what I say !

All : (in union) : That's it ! Damn.
foreigners : Damn dagoes : Damn
Catholics : Damn Sheekes : Damn niggers !
Jailem ! Shoot'em ! Hang'am ! Lych'em ! Burn'em (80-1).

It is quite evident that the characters are antagonistic and racists. For instance, five says that "politics is a man's business"(80). And four says, "woman's place is in the home "(80).

Being the host, Zero has to participate in the ritual. Like Zero, the other characters are dull, empty and formless. Zero is a victim of the socio-economic system. He is deprived of the will to choose and the intellect to engender. In this respect, viewing characters in The Adding Machine, as moving robots, Durham writes :

> For The Adding Machine can be viewed as presenting a denial of man's free will : Zero is an automation, produced by the responding to his economic and social system and adhering to the moral and ethical codes growing out of this system. Thus man is blameless, the victim o the system debasing his into a machine and casting him aside when a better machine is made (1978, 49).

Thus, Mr. Zero's world is the world of America with its industrialization and mechanization where man loses not only his dignity, but also his identity. His drabness and his distorted state of mind are revealed via his monologues and asides. Nevertheless, on hearing the boss' word that he is fired, Zero, in a hysterical fit which is

expressionistically perfected, kills his boss. In scene 4, Zero's monologue which is presented in a collage form reveals the distorted image of his dazed mind, the swift shifts from the present to the past and vice versa, to talk about his faithful service in the company are presented through flashbacks and asides. Zero's monologue is very suggestive, for it is meant to depict his flickering and leaping between his sense of guilt and the legitimacy of murdering the boss. Being fired and deprived of his will and freedom, Zero is dehumanized. This firing act is a symbol of socio-economic injustice, a distinct characteristic of capitalism.

Revealing through asides and monologues the distorted image of his past career, Zero states :

> Twenty five years in one job an' I never missed a day, fifty-two weeks in a year. Fifty-two an'fifty-two an'fifty-twoi an'. They didn't have t'look for me, did they ? I didn't try to run away, did I ? Where was goin'to run to ! I wasn't thinkin' about it at all see? I'll tell you what I was thinkin' about-how I was goin'to break it to the wife about being canned (84-5).

Scene 5 takes place in the graveyard where Zero meets Shrdlu, the murderer. This scene viably presents the dichotomies between man and society, heaven and the Inferno, the innocent and the murderer. Because of his criminality, Shrdlu should be put in the inferno. Instead he is sent to the Elysian Fields, symbol of Heaven, and his mother to the Inferno for she is to blame, because, according to Rice, being a saint,

Shrdlu's mother did not offer him the opportunity to get experience from life by himself.

After rigorously presenting the tremendous impact of mechanization on man and the hoplessness of finding a panacea for man's debasing conditions and depersonalized state, Rice, in the dialogue of the corposes in the final part of the play, significantly offers Zero a new job in "repair and service station" (103). The new job necessitates Zero's operation of a "super – hyper-adding machine" (106). This job needs the release of a lever with the toe of Zero's right foot. This scene expressionistically repeats what has been done in Scene 2 of the drama.

Scene 7 opens with the clicking of an adding machine before the curtain rises. After the curtain rises, Zero is seen" seated completely absorbed in the operation of an adding machine. He presses the keys and pulls the lever with mechanical precision" (102).

Commenting on the expressionist devices in that scene, Valgemae states :

> The scene opens with an expressionistic setting rivaled only by that of the murder in scene 2 ... The mechanical precision with which he (Zero) presses the keys and pulls the lever objectifies the working of a mind turned into a machine (67).

Realizing that the audiences shy away from the realist plays Arthur Miller, like Elmer Rice, employed expressionism as an appropriate dramatic mode for exploring man's inner life. A great deal

of the dramatic spectacle of Death of Salesman pivots around Willy's state of mind and nearly half the play is pictured in distorted images, flashbacks, asides and symbols. In the introduction to The Collected Plays, Miller states that the original title of Death of A Salesman was "The Inside of His Head". He comments that the play " was conceived half in laughter, for the inside of his head was a mass of contradictions" (1958, 23).

Miller adopts the expressionist method as a leitomotif and a dramaturgic feature in his plays. His adoption of expressionism is due to his renouncement to realism. In his Harvard lecture. "The Family in Modern Drama", Miller pinpoints the spectrum of dramatic forms that could appropriately be employed to dovetail socio-economic, philosophical and psychological themes that cope with the many – sidedness of man. Miller argues that he renounces realism on the basis that it "has been a familiar bore; and by means of cut out sets, revolving stages, musical backgrounds, new and more imaginative lighting schemes, our stage is striving to break up the old living room". (1965, 220). According to Miller, two worlds of man are to be considered : one is societal and related to his interrelationship with the surroundings and the other is private and related to the inner workings of his denzin life.

By referring to such essential expressionist components as "cut out sets, revolving stages and musical backgrounds", Miller attempts to establish a nexus and engender a channel between these two worlds.

On tracing the historical roots of expressionism which were originated with Aeschylus' dramas, Miller defines expressionism as follows :

> It is a form of play which manifestly seeks to dramatize the conflict of either social, religious, ethical, or moral forces per se, and in their own naked roles, rather than to present psychologically realistic human characters in a more or less realistic environment (1965, 224).

And of the implementation of expressionism in Death of A Salesman, Miller, in the introduction to The Collected Plays, states :

> I wished to create a form which, in itself as a form, would literary be the process of Willy Loman's way of mind... Any dramatic form is an artifice, a way of transforming a subjective feeling into something that can be comprehended through public symbols (24).

Crucial to the employment of expressionism in Death of A Salesman, is the treatment of such themes as the father –son confrontation, transformation and regeneration of characters. Like Rice, Miller states that the play was composed under a peculiar type of experience. "I had willingly employed expressionism", Miller argues, "but always to create a subjective truth, and this play which was manifestly "written", seemed as though nobody had written it at all but that it had simply "happened" (39).

Unlike Rice who negated his influence by the German expressionists, Miller admits his fascination by them. "I had always been attracted", he states, "and repelled by the brilliance of German expressionism after World War I" (39). Nevertheless, Miller deals with

expressionism in a different way from that of the Germans. "One aim in Salesman", Miller says, "was "felt" characterizations rather than for purposes of demonstration for which the Germans had used it" (39).

Mirroring man's ceaseless attempts to have a grip on the forces of life that tormented him, Death of A Salesman employs expressionism to universalize its themes which, according to Miller, should not be confined to the portrayal of the superficial façade of external reality, but it should be exploring man's inner life. In this connection, Miller comments :

> If for instance, the struggle in Death of A Salesman were simply between father and son for recognition and forgiveness it would diminish in importance. But when it extends itself out of the family circle and into society, it broaches those questions of social status, social honor and recognition, which expand its vision and lift it out of the merely particular toward the fate of the generality of men (1965, 223).

Time is presented in a distorted way in which the present and the past are mixed up and fused in a way which necessitates Miller's employment of expressionism whose pivotal dramatic manifestations are distortions and rapid shifts between the past and the present. In the introduction to The Collected Plays, Miller elucidates his concept of time. He expounds :

> The Salesman image was from the beginning absorbed with the concept that nothing in life comes

> "next" but that everything exists together – and at the same time within us; that there is no past to be "brought forward" in a human being, but he is his past at every moment and that the present is merely that which his past is incapable of noticing and smelling and reacting to (23).

Like Rice in The Adding Machine, Miller in Death of A Salesman presents a finicky image of a man victimized by a manipulative and exploiting economic system which casts him away from the mere dream of bigness and success. Presented via distorted images and flashbacks as a pawn of time, Willy Loman lives in his dreams of the good image of the past associated with his father and his job as a seller of flutes. Points of affinities between The Adding Machine and Death of A Salesman in connection with the littleness of man in his futile attempts to cope with the machine age are to be traced. In this regard, Pradhan states :

> The idea of machine as the "serpent" is effectively portrayed in the last scene with the snake-like description of the tape recorder which represents the coldly impersonal attitude of the employer not only towards Willy but towards his own family whose affection and ties he has transformed into a machine (69 – 70).

Death of A Salesman opens with music heard from a flute which casts light on the landscape which is nature with its grass and greenish vitality which contrasts with what the play's title implies. A precise

expressionistic panorama of the setting is observable and a meticulous description of the Salesman's "fragile home" is felt. The dramatic spectacle provides the audiences with rather unusual feelings. "An air of the dream", Miller manifests, "clings to the place, a dream rising out of reality" (130).

Unlike Mrs. Zero who appears hateful, domineering and selfish, Linda in Miller's drama provides a paradigm of the American faithful wife. "She more than loves him" (Willy, Miller says, " she admires him, as though his mercurial nature, his temper, his massive dreams and little cruelties, served her only as a sharp reminder of the turbulent longings within him" (131).

The following dialogue between Biff and Happy in Death of A Salesman, presents a viable image of the modern capitalist society and the psychological and economic defeat of the American youth :

> Biff : I tell ya, hap. I don't know what the future is. I don't know what I'm supposed to want.
>
> Happy : What do you mean?
>
> Biff : ... I spent six or seven years after high school trying to work myself up. Shipping clerk, Salesman, business of one kind or another. And it's a measly manner of existence. To get on that subway on the hot morning in summer. To devote your whole life to keeping stock, or making phone call, or selling or buying. To suffer fifty weeks of the year for the sake of a two-week vacation, when all you really desire is to be outdoors, with your shirt off of the next fella. And always to

> have to get ahead of the next fella. And still-that's how you build a future (138).

In Act II, the scene where Willy goes to see Howard Wagner in his office represents the paradigm of the whole play for it shows Willy's firing after thirty four years of hard work in Howard's company. When asking Howard to find him a place for work in the New York branch of the company for now he is tired and, needs to work near his home, Howard's reaction was callous and rather antagonistic towards Willy's demand. The following dialogue manifests the dehumanization and depersonalization Willy experiences :

Willy : I'll go to Boston.

Howard : Willy, you can't go to Boston for us,

Willy : Why can't I go ?

Howard : I don't want you to represent us. I've been meaning to tell you for a long time now.

Willy : Are you firing me ?

Howard : I think you need a good long rest, Willy

Willy : Howard.

Howard : And when you feel better, come back, and we'll see if we can work something out.

Willy : But I gott a earn money, I'm in no position to.

Howard : Where are your sons ? Why don't your sons give you a hand ? (128).

Variations of music, lighting, nature-like atmosphere and viable effects of colour that depict the flickering and anxieties of Willy and the change of props and costumes are expressionistic manifestations which

intensily widen the scope for Miller to portray his themes. Also, distorted images connected with nostalgia for the happy days of Willy past life arė prevalent in the play. This is evident in Willy's dialogue with Howard. Willy states :

> I realized that selling was the greatest career a man could want. Cause what could be more satisfying than to be able to go... into twenty or thirty different cities, and pick up a phone, and be remembered and loved and helped by so many different people? (180).

Willy proceeds through memory and flashbacks to recall the past connection with his friend Dave Singleman and in relation to his father Willy recalls :

> In those days there was personality in it, Howard. There was respect, and comardship, and gratitude in it. Today, it's all cut and dried, and there's no change for bringing friendship to bear-or personality (180-1).

Significantly, the tape recorder symbolizes the automized image of the machine and the ready-made and mechanical phrases of both Howard and Willy. In this regard, Ruby Cohn comments :

> The tape recorder is a symbol of both Howard and Willy, with ready-made phrases uttered mechanically. Howard and Willy show two sides of

> American progress : one is failure and the other success, with little to choose between them (74).

In Death of A Salesman, Willy's major preoccupation is his family, his wife Linda and his two sons Biff and Happy. Willy brought them up in artifical and false ways to believe in business and money. He also trained them to speak the language of business, of successful careers through making deals depending on how they should talk and on "personal attractiveness" (134).

Though "low' and insignificant as his name implies, Willy Loman never loses the hope of any sort of success connected with the American dream of material success. He has strenously been looking for materialistic success and, insists that " it is not a matter of what you do", but how you know and the smile in your face"! (1984). He optimistically locates the secret of material success in "contacts" 9184), expecting that " a man can end with diamonds here on the basis of being liked!" (1984).

Thus, it is natural for Willy's son, Biff to confront his father, for he is brought up in his father's world of illusion which is viably antithetical to the harsh materialistic world they live in. In this respect, Jacobson comments on Willy's feverish search for material success epitomized in his tragedy and the resultant breakdown failure :

> The consequences of failing to attain prominence and to transform society into a home are loneliness, frustration and ultimately despair. Because Loman needs gratification to take a social form, his life is

> crushed by indifference, criticism, rejection, and abandonment (47).

Willy's consideration of the family bond as an expedient of building up sound human relationships is associated with Miller's philosophy of good people. In this connection, Popkin interprets Miller's concept of good people in that they "have no theories, no ideologies, except for their goodness. Their practice and their faith are the same-doing goodness. Their virtue needs no legal or official sanction, and, in practice, it may defy the official world" (227). However, Willy's adoption of his ideals which can not possibly be achieved anywhere except in his own mind is manifestly expressed via expressionism. In this regard, Porter elucidates the thematic and dramaturgic implementation of expressionism in the play :

> Death of A Salesman encompasses two dimensions the dream-world of the success myth with its merging of post triumphs ... and the actual world of the small, brick-enclosed house in Brooklyn. To achieve this merger, Miller uses an expressionistic setting, a skeletonized house which symbolizes the encroachment of urban economics on the family. The "one dimensional "roof surrounded on all sides by a "solid vault of apartment houses". The walls of the Loman home are cut away to permit free passage to the personae in dream and reminscence sequences (27-8).

Willy's contradictory mind shows his vacillation between the present and the past and his ambivalent attitude towards nature. At the outset of the play, Willy rejects his son's idea of making a farm project. "How can he find himself on a farm ? Is that a life ? A Farmhand ?" (134) asks Willy. Meanwhile, we see Willy condemning the streets which are crowded with care where there is no room for fresh air and even grass, can not grow anywhere. Later in the play, we observe him cultivating the garden. The moment Willy started to take a flashlight, hoe and seeds to plant the garden is a moment of Willy's reconciliation with reality.

With the help of such expressionistic devices as flashbacks and free association, Miller manages to introduce characters who are now dead and they only exist in Willy's mind. The following dialogue which takes place between Willy and his good neighbour Charley illustrates that Ben, Willy's brother who is now dead is externalized out of Willy's mind. Asking for advice and help, Willy pathetically recalls Ben :

Willy : I'm getting awfully tired, Ben.
(Ben's music is heard. Ben looks around.
at everything).

Charley : Good, keep playing; you'll sleep better.
Did you call me Ben ?
(Ben looks at his watch).

Willy : That's funny., for a second there you reminded me of my brother Ben.

Ben. : I only hae a few minutes. (He strolls, inspetcting the place Willy and Charley continue playing.).

Charley : You never heard from him again, heh ?
Since that time ?

Willy : Didn't Linda tell you ? Couple of weeks ago we goit a letter from his wife in Africa. He died.

Charley : That so.

Ben : (Chuckling) : So this is Brooklyn, et?

Charley : May be you're in for some of his money.

Willy : Noa, he had seven sons. That's just one opportunity.
I had with that man...

Ben. : I must make a train William. There are several properties I'm looking at in Alaska.

Willy : Sure, sure ! If I'd gone with him to Alaska that time, everything would've been totally different.

Charley : Go on, you'd frose to death up there.

Willy : What've you talking about ?

Ben. : Opportunity is tremendous in Alaska, William. Surprised you've not up there.

Willy : Sure, tremendous.

Charley : Heh ?

Willy : There was the only man I ever met who knew the answers.

Charely : Who ?

Ben. : How are you all ?

Willy : (taking a pot, smiling) : Fine, Fine.

Charley : Pretty sharp tonight.

Ben. : Is mother living with you?

Willy : No, she died long time ago.

Charley : Who ? (154 – 5).

Thus, by externalizing Ben's character out of Willy's mind through expressionist devices., Miller manages to reveal the traumatic experience Willy lives in as a pawn of time that leads to his tragic end. Commenting on that dialogue Ruby Cohn explains :

> Near the end of Act II Willy has a fantasy of asking his dead brother Ben for advice about his own suicide. Through blocking, lighting, and music, Miller sets off these verbal excursions into Willy's memory and fantasy, so that we never confuse them with the suspenseful present (71).

On attempting to find out reasons, through interpretation and comparison, for the deterioration of Zero and Willy as victims of the American capitalist society, Ronald Hayman states :

> Willy Loman's values are very much those of contemporary society... and his downfall derives both from his personal failure in relations to his values and from the failure of the values themselves. Far more than Elmer Rice's Mr. Zero or any other modern Everyman, Willy Loman articulates through the way he lives and dies the latent self-destructiveness of a society in which the false promises of advertising corrode not only our business lives but our personal relationships (27).

The most desperate and frustrating conditions of Zero and Willy are due to the machine age which alienated and isolated them, not only

from themselves, but also from society. On tackling values which were prevalent during the 1920s, Death of a Salesman shows its affinities with The Adding Machine. Miller's play, Welland states, "reveals little man as the victim of the capitalist big business world in 1949, have been to repeat what Elmer Rice had done in The Adding Machine twenty-six years earlier" (40). Welland continues to maintain similarities in the employment of expressionism in the two plays. For instance, explaining the dramatic significance of the tape recorder image in Miller's play, Welland comments :

> The tape recorder serves two purposes in the scene : When Willy stumbles against it and sets it accidentally into motion it precipitates on hysterical breakdown that symbolises the central theme of the play in Willy's horror at his inability to switch it off- to switch off the recorded past. Whether the past is that of his own sons recorded on his memory and conscience, or that of Howard's son recorded on a mechanical instrument (41).

Essential to Miller's and Rice's plays are the vigorous representation of the socio-economic follies of the capitalist system which stripped man of his own values and his cerebral potentialities, thus alienating him. Man's alienation leads to his sense of loss, not only of identity, but also of the soul. Hence, Zero and Loman could be regarded as overt embodiments of all the symptoms of the insane capitalistic society. They appear as archetypes of the oppressed, the conformists and the frustrated. Zero's and Loman's alienation takes the

forms of dreams, distorted mental states, hallucinatory and hysterical conditions. In this respect, Pradhan expresses his view concerning Miller's and Rice's attitude towards life as embodied in the characters of Zero and Willy :

> Miller's emphasis is on hope and love and forgiveness in case of Willy Loman whose life is warmed out by his wife's love and the return of Biff's affection. Mr. : Zero's fall is symbolised by sterility, created by a cold, impersonal universe... Rice's view of life is essentially Darwinian, with the addition that the evolutionary process is a cosmic waste and moves from nothing... " (70).

It is evident that while Willy fails to achieve his ideals of social relationships implied in his failure to convince Howard to keep him working in his company, he succeeds in his private life, to secure his wife's economic life and to gain his son's affection. On the other hand, Zero's situation takes a different direction. He achieves nothing both on the social and the private levels started out in the evolution as a slave", Pradhan argues," and has ended up as a Zero" (70). Pradhan proceeds in his argument to compare the method both Rice and Miller employed in the treatment of their protagonists. He states :

> ... whereas Miller employs the image of Eden and its archetypes to reexamine the relationship between authority and obedience, innocence and sin, forgiveness and love, Rice takes his protagonist to the Edenic setting (scene 6) to emphasize the

> magnitude of the futility of living and the utter
> hostility of the controlling universe (70).

Thus, Zero as his name, expressionistically implies, fails to achieve any sort of success. He is the victimized figure of the ever increasing machine-dominated society. Various distortions of dialogue, abbreviations of language, inarticulate speeches, bare sides of the stage are expressionistic devices that helped in crystallizing Zero's and Loman's private and social worlds.

American expressionism has added to the modern repertory a significant body of vivid and dynamic plays" (1973, 203).

# Chapter II

## Silence as Expedient of Communication

In the Preface to his book Silence : The Phenomenon and Its Ontological Significance, Bernard P. Dauenhauer discusses the ontological concept of silence and, agrees with Max Picard in defining silence as "a force, a constitutive principle distinct from but associated with other forces, such as spirit and word, in the constitution of the human world. That is, silence is an ontological principle" (vii). Dauenhauer phenomenally, deals with silence, its engendered aspects and its socio-philosophical and artistic implications in the performing and written arts which employ gestures and disciplined movements rather than sounds, such as mime" (3-4). Silence even "occurs in non performing arts, such as painting and sculpture" (3-4).The focus on silence "as the foil to or a component of verbal utterance" is associated with "the use of spoken words"(4-5).

Sometimes silence, as an ontological phenomenon, is misused and misinterpreted as a negative aspect or a mere gap between words. "On the contrary' silence", Dauenhauer argues, "is regarded as an utterance of a peculiar kind, a way of "saying" something determinate"(5).

Essential to Dauenhauer's focus on the positive aspects of silence is their employment in written arts. He states :

> ...initial evidence of the positive character of silence can be found in numerous plays. Harold Pinter, for example, explicitly distinguishes between pauses and silences. They do different kinds of work. The

> former punctuate or pace a theme but the latter serve to shift from one theme to another. Sartre, too, includes directions in his scripts calling for performances of silence. In another vein, silence can be seen at work in the interaction between Oedipus and Teiresias in Oedipus Rex. Much of the tension within and between these characters hinges on the issue of what is to be said and what is not to be said. And in Samuel Beckett's Waiting For Godot. silence is a pervading atmosphere (5).

In her article "The Actor's World of Silence", Bari Rolfe stresses the multi-dimensional aspects of the modern theatre's silent world. She also traces the development of the theatre of silence which "ranges from Chekhov's eloquent pauses and Wilder's engaging mime through Pinter's uncomfortable silences and Beckett's wordless dramas" (394).

This chapter will confine itself to the consideration of Beckett's and Pinter's theatre of silence with special emphasis on Waiting for Godot and The Caretaker. The goal is to reveal through analysis, interpretation and discovery Beckett's and Pinter's dramatic vision of the theatre's silent world and how this vision is implemented in the plays. The aim is to unravel the dramatic and human implications of the various components of silence encompassed in the dramatic dialogue which is intentionally impregnated with ellipses, pauses, silences, dots, repetitions and evasions. These tacit dramatic features remarkably formulate silence with its ontological, dramatic and socio-political perspectives.

An entry to The Oxford English Dictionary reads that "this conception, according to which disease was a particular entity which

lodged in the body, was called ontological"(181). If we are to consider silence as a viable manifestation of a state of psychological confusion, of menace, of impasse and of apathy, which are prevalent features in Beckett's and Pinter's theatre of silence, we could say that this type of silence is ontological.

Identity crisis and lack of communication which represent the dominant themes of Beckett's and Pinter's dramatic writings in general and Waiting for Godot and The Caretaker in particular necessitate the invigoration of the theatre of silence in which content and form merge to depict the enigma of the Beckettian and Pinterian world of silence, which more or less, deals with the ontological and realistic images of the human condition in its most mute and bleak situations.

Silence is not presented as a negative aspect of Beckett's end Pinter's dramatic dialogue, but as an expedient of communication. It is not a mere devaluation of verbal language for its incapability of conveying man's a acute experiences, but it also ensures the indecipherable and evasive utterances of characters exemplified in dots, monologues, pauses and one-sided speech which recurs while other characters are busying themselves in finding a way out for self-assertion and for securing themselves from nonentity. Most important for characters in their quest for identity is to grasp the unattainable language of the self.

Man's sense of despair, anguish and of being levelled down and hollowed out of his mind and his feeling of isolation and alienation are major themes in Beckett's and Pinter's Waiting for Godot and The Caretaker. Motivations for the choice of Beckett end Pinter as subject to this chapter are connected with strong affinities that get the two playwrights under the umbrella of the theatre of the absurd in which silence represents its pivot. However, Pinter employs

the absurdist approach in more oriented ways. In his valuable article, "Logic, Paradox, and Pinter's Homecoming". Richard M. Coe stresses that 'this reorientation involves a shift. in emphasis from the logical to the psychological and a resolution to the epistemological aspect of absurdity (488).

Pinter's belonging to absurd drama has been asserted by many critics such as Martin Esslin, Ruby Cohn, Bigsby, Proctor and Others. In his book British Theatre 1950-70, Arnold P. Hinchliffe maintains the nature of Pinter's dramatic writings. He explains :

> In all his work Pinter has exhibited a dual nature fantasy and realism. Real speech, real situations but questions about the nature of reality. Twentieth century dialogue but nonsense poetry as well; the comic and the tragic-multivalent as life itself. He is the craftsman who shapes and the poet haunted by images of menace to which no amount of shaping can give purpose; in this sense he belongs to Absurd Drama (140).

Most important in Martin Esslin's The Theatre of the Absurd is the treatment of the problem of communication and the conflicting wills due to our incapability to get acquainted with the self because of its "constant flux and therefore ever outside our grasp" (17). Therefore, to tackle the theme of identity crisis, is to inevitably seek a type of language which has an evasive nature, to trace the self in its struggle for identity in an incoherent universe. Hence, the language of silence in its multi-dimensional aspects, is the most appropriate vehicle for achieving self-realization and communication in an absurdist end incommunicable world.

Although many criticisms have been dealing with Beckett's and Pinter's dramatic writings, there are still several unanswered questions as to the nature and significance of their statements and theatrical devices. Therefore, I propose to deal specifically with silence as a thematic and technical component of their theatre with special reference to Waiting For Godot and The Caretaker.

Providing reasons for the permutation from the use of traditional language to the employment of the language of silence with its diverse elements such as pauses, dots and evasions, and justifying the conscious withdrawal from the world of verbal language; considering it as a devalued method of communication , to the nonverbal expression, in her book, The Language of Silence :On the Unspoken and the Unspeakable in Modern Drama. Leslie Kane Comments:

> The seeds for this altered vision of the drama are to be found in the shifting ground of the late nineteenth century- the nihilism, uncertainty, alienation and despair which emanated from the world of scientific, political and social upheaval(14).

Leslie Kane continues, in her argument to justify the dramatias' ceaseless attempts to find out in the language of silence an alternative method of communication. She explains the various types of silence in a way to point out the state of damnation and stagnation the modern man is entrapped in. She writes:

> The fluidity of silence allows the artist to journey to the depths of the psyche, to exteriorize, dramatize, and emphasize what: the symbolists termed l'etat d'ame. The dumb silence of apathy, the sober silence

> of solemnity, the fertile silence of awareness, the active silence of perception the baffled silence of confusion ; the uneasy silence of impasse, the muzzled silence of outrage, the expectant silence of waiting, the reproachful silence of censure, the tacit silence of approval, the vituperative silence of accusation, the eloquent silence of awe, the unnerving silence of menace, the peaceful silence of communion and the irrevocable of death illustrate by their unspoken response to speech that experiences exist for which we lack the word (14).

Crucial to Beckett's and Pinter's dramatic world of silence are "the baffled silence of confusion " , and "the expectant silence of waiting' in Waiting For Godot and "the dumb silence of apathy" and 'the uneasy silence of impasse" in The Caretaker. These aspects of silence which compose man's external and internal existence crystallize the ontological concept of silence which considers the silent world of man as a set of entities that formulate his own existence.

In his book What is Literature?, Sartre sees that the writer, by the very nature of his work, lives in the universe of language and has to find a convenient method of artistic expression to include the various phenomena that interpret the universe. Silence, according to Sartre, is not less in degree, than the uttered word. He states :

> Silence itself is defined in relationship to words as the pause in music receives its meaning from the group of notes round it. This silence is a moment of language, being silent not being dumb, it is to refuse to speak, and therefore to keep on speaking. Thus if a writer has chosen to remain silent on any aspect

> whatever of the world, or, according to an expression which says just what it means, to pass over it in silence...(14-15).

The writer is not evaluated by what he writes, but by the method he uses in writing. "one is not a writer," Sartre explains, "for having chosen to say certain things, but for having chosen to say them in a certain way.,. the style makes the value of prose. But it should pass unnoticed"(15).

In Waiting for Godot and The Caretaker. Beckett and Pinter employed a dramatic style which is encompassed in the enigmatic world their characters live in as prisoners, not only' of the self and of time, but also of their social conditions. In their mercurial permutation from the traditional speech to the nonverbal language, Beckett and Pinter managed to achieve, through their adoption of the tacit language, great fame and universality. Beckett's dramas assign a pivotal dramatic authority to silence. In his book Language and Silence, George Steiner emphasizes the silent aspects in Beckett's theatre. He states :

> Monsieur Beckett is moving, with unflinching Irish logic, toward a form of drama in which a character, his feet trapped in concrete and his mouth gagged, will stare at the audience and say nothing, The imagination has supped its fill of horror end of the unceremonious trivia through which modern horror is often expressed (25).

In his portrayal of the tramps as prisoners of time in Waiting For Godot, Beckett is implicitly influenced by Proust. In his short but illuminating book on Proust, Beckett maintains the problem of identity

and the question of time. He sees "Time" as "the double- headed monster of damnation and Salvation "(1). His characters with their conflicting wills, like Proust's are entrapped in time and struggle to find a way out and this is the case of Estragon and Vladimir in Waiting For Godot, Beckett maintains :

> Proust's creatures... are victims of this predominating condition and circumstance- Time; victims as lower organisms, conscious only of two dimensions and suddenly confronted with the mystery of height, are victims: victims and prisoners. There is no escape from the hours and the days. Neither from tomorrow nor from yesterday. There is not escape from yesterday because yesterday has deformed us, or been deformed by us (2).

Influenced by Proust' s style of writing and his attitude towards the complementarity of form and content in writing, Beckett states:

> For Proust, as for the painter, style is more a question of vision than of technique. Proust does not share the superstition that form is nothing and content everything.... For Proust the quality of language is more important than any system of ethics or aesthetics. Indeed he makes no attempt to dissociate form from content. The one is a concretion of the other, the revelation of a world (67).

Stressing Beckett's hingeing on silence in his ceaseless quest for the truth, Steiner explains that "the writer, who is by definition master and

slave of language, states that the living truth is no longer sayable. The theatre of Beckett is haunted by this insight" (72).

Beckett's dramatic style of silence is originated with his novelistic writings. In this context, in his article "Lucky's speech in Beckett's Waiting for Godot: A Punctuated Sense- Line Arrangement", Anselm Atkins stresses that the genesis of Beckett's use of silence connected with his novel The Unnameable in which the narrator sees that "Man's vocation... is to go silent, to babble on into silence' (462). Atkins goes on to say that "Lucky... is just such a man babbling his way to silence. his speech in Act I is a continuous run-on of unpunctuated, idiotic words and phrases..." (426).

In Waiting for Godot and The Caretaker. characters are presented in quiet and isolated settings and open roads to gag, to stare at each other and say nothing, They withdraw from the outside world to quest for identity and to seek a meaning for life. In this respect, Leslie Kane comments:

> Lucky in Beckett's En attendant Godot ... and Aston in Pinter's The Caretaker are only a few characters in modern drama who are taciturn and inarticulate. Closer scrutiny of the plays reveals that those characters stand outside, their non participation in the speech act symbolizes withdrawal from temporal, spatial , or social reality (19).

Silences, Pauses, dots, repetitions and ellipses are tacit features of the Beckettian dramatic dialogue in Waiting for Godot. Beckett employs the method of reiteration to emphasize the nullity of the tramps' strenuous fight to break down the walls of the prison of time and to feel , instead of 'nothing to be done' that " something has

happened' or "something is going to happen'. Such stereotypical, sentences as what are you waiting for?" and "Nothing to be done" are used as an absurdist medium of expression. In addition to silences, dots and reiterations, Beckett employs the language of cancellation to provide the character with the opportunity to recall a lost thought. That language implies, not only an ontological state of stasis in the external reality, but it also engenders linguistic gaps that fill in the gaps within man. In this connection, Leslie Kane states:

> Beckett has employed a language of cancellation. to evoke the impression of stasis and instantaniety and to elicit interior fluctuation. His exploration of pauses and silences, which contributes to the sensation of fixity and which evoke evanescence and emptiness, may be considered his most notable contribution to the use of the unspoken as structure and statement (129).

In Waiting for Codot, silence frequently occurs to intensify the drama of anguish, of confusion and of waiting to reveal the characters' constant fight in an attempt to transcend the sense of loss and despair. As a stage instruction, the word "silence" occasionally recurs to entail that sense of void and meaninglessness. When Estragon and Vladimir lose the sense of meaningful communication, they fail to fight with any noises that disturb their mute and stagnant world. The following dialogue reveals that sense of failure end anguish:

Vladimir : They make a noise like feathers.
Estragon : Like leaves.
Vladimir : Like ashes.
Estragon : Like leaves.
Long Silence.

Vladimir : Say something !
Estragon : I'm trying.
Long Silence.
Vladimir : (in anguish). Say Anything at all !
Estragon : What do we do now ?
Vladimir : Wait for Godot.
Estragon : Ah ! (63)

In this respect, in his book The Dramatic works of Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter: A Comparative Analysis of Main Themes and Dramatic Technique. Per Olof Hegberg comments that in Waiting for Godot :

> ... each attempt at communication releases the tension of silence, and tentative activity starts up from the nullity of waiting , as if a bubble were blown up from the surface of the sea, eternity is filled with time, or past time as it is called, space is filled with the conflicting wills and thoughts of characters (112).

In their constant attempts to discuss the identity of Godot with Pozzo, both Vladimir and Estragon ontologically express Godot's qualifications through dots as a tacit feature of silence. In their ontological argument for the being of Godot, characters carry out the following dialogue:

Pozzo : (Peremptory) : Who is Godot ?

Estragon : Godot ?

Pozzo : You took me for Godot.
Estragon : Oh no, sir, not for an instant, sir.
Pozzo : Who is he ?

Vladimir : Oh; he's a ... he's a kind of acquaintance.
Estragon : Nothing of the kind, we hardly know him.
Vladimir : True... We don't know him very well... but all the same..
Estragon : Personally I wouldn't even know him if I saw him.
Pozzo : You took me for him.
Estragan : (recoiling before Pozzo). That's to say... you understand... the dust... the strain... waiting...I confess...I imagined.. for a second...
Pozzo : Waiting ? So you were waiting for him?(23).

Ample gestures and dramatic pauses that entail "the expectant silence of waiting" in Leslie Kane's words, unravel the tension of waiting in a spacious universe that intensifies the void, the evanescence and the absurdity of the human condition. To wait, according to Beckett, is to experience the awful burden of time, the illogical and the infinite atmosphere of the prison of life. To break down that prison, Beckett resorts to the cancellation of words. "Words, like man", Leslie Kane states, "are prisoners of time. In order to break the bonds of time , in order to express the illogical and the infinite and simulate the instantaneous and the integral, Beckett has devised a language of cancellation" (106).

Silences indicate isolation and alienation between the external world of characters and their internal world on the one hand and between one character and another on the other. "Essential to an understanding of the coalescence of speech and silence integral to Beckett's drama ", Leslie Kane explains, "is the distinction between

silences and silence. Silences are the intervals between verbalized responses that indicate separation.... Silence, on the other hand is the Void, the Nothing, the ultimate language of the self that is unattainable"(105).

As a torturing tool of damnation time is condemned. Instead of helping man to resist that sense of agony and fear it entraps him to suffer. Pozzo is asked to kill time by making Lucky sing. However, they are in a state of peaceful silence of communion'

Vladimir : Before you go tell him to sing !

Pozzo : Who ?

Vladimir : Lucky.

Pozzo : To sing ?

Vladimir : Yes. Or to think. Or to recite.

Pozzo : But he's dumb

Vladimir : Dumb!

Pozzo : Dumb. He can't even groan.

Vladimir : Dumb ! Since when ?

Pozzo : (Suddenly furious). Have you not done tormenting me with your accursed time. It's abominable !

When ! When ! One day, is that not enough for you , one day like any other day, one day he went dumb, one day I went blind, One day we'll go deaf one day - we were born, one day we shall die, the same day, the same second, is that enough for you ? (89).

Man's senses are numbed. Beckett, like Proust, sees that time and memory annihilate man and make him feel that sense of loss and fear. Metaphorically, Lucky is dumb, but actually he bitterly experiences 'the dumb silence of apathy".

As a tacit method of expression, objects are employed to suggest silent significant roles in Waiting for Godot and in The Caretaker. They either appear to represent extensions of the characters' quest for self-realization or to get hold of reality itself. In this connection, Hagberg states:

> They [characters] can busy themselves with the objects and can establish their identity.. by touching them. The possibility of defining the identity of the objects also gives the characters a chance to define themselves in relation to the objects (25).

Objects, though silent and mute, lend themselves to various interpretations of characters, situations and states of mind that lost grasp of reality. For instance, Estragon and Vladimir occasionally busy themselves with exchanging hats and with the boots.

The mistrust in man's mind, due to isolation, separation despair, leads to a remarkable doubt and suspicion of a reasoning. The mistrust in human reason is quite apparent in the dialogue in which Estragon and Vladimir discuss the possibility of hanging themselves

Estragon : Let's hang ourselves immediately 1

Vladimir : From a bough ? they go towards the tree I wouldn't trust it.

Estragon : We can always try.

Vladimir : Go ahead.

Estragan : After you

Vladimir: : No, no , you first.

Estragan: : Why me 1

Vladimir: : You're lighter than I am

Estragon : Just so !

Vladimir : I don't understand.

Estragon : Use your intelligence, can't you 1
Vladimir uses his intelligence.

Vladimir : (finally) I remain in the dark.

Estragon : This is how it is (He reflects) The bough.. the bough (Angrily) use your head, can't you?

Vladimir : You're my only hope.

Estragon : (With effort. ) Gogo light- bough not break- Gogo dead. Didi heavy- bough break- Didi alone - whereas-

Vladimir : I hadn't thought of that.

Estragon : If it hangs you it'ill hang anything (17-18),

Silences entail not only outward separation of characters, but also the inward separation from the self. The following dialogue reveals the internal reactions of characters to the desperate image of time.

Estragon : In the meantime nothing happens

Pozzo : You find it tedious !

Estragon : Somewhat.

Pozzo : (to Vladimir). And you, sir P

Vladimir : I've been better entertained.

Pozzo : Gentlemen, you have been ... civil to me.

Estragon : Not at all.

Vladimir : What an idea !

Pozzo : Yes, yes, you have been correct. So that I ask myself is there anything I can do in my turn for these honest fellows who are having such a dull, dull time (38-39).

Because of their alienation and isolation, due to the tedious and awful image of time, characters sometimes speak noises which are ironically contrasted with silence which is not less articulate than noises.

Pozzo : I must go.
Estragon : And your half hunter ?
Pozzo : I must have left it at the manor. Silence.
Estragon : Then Adieu.
Pozzo : Adieu.
Vladimir : Adieu.
Pozzo : Adieu.
Silence (46-47).

The tramps' reiterative use of language, pauses and silences reflect their fugue state of isolation, separation and meditation. They ensure the desperate psychological state Estragon and Vladimir experience after the departure of Godot's messenger. They pretend to be happy for the arrival of Godot's messenger. However, when they are faced with the awful reality due to Godot's delay, they are driven into the 'baffled silence of confusion".

Vladimir : You must be happy, too, deep down , if you only knew it.
Estragon : Happy about what 1
Vladimir : To be back with me again.
Estragon : Would you say so I
even if it's not true.
Vladimir : Say you are,
Estragon : What am I to say ?
Vladimir : Say, I am happy
Estragon : I am happy
Vladimir : So am I.

Estragon : So am I.

Vladimir : We are happy.

Estragan : We are happy. (Silence)(60).

In Waiting for Godot long silences are employed to cope with the spatial atmosphere of time. They reveal the state of despair characters experience because of their failure to communicate. The following dialogue depicts the tramps' ceaseless need for talk :

Vladimir : ... We could start all over again perhaps

Estragon : That should be easy.

Vladimir : It's the start that's difficult.

estragon : you can start from anything.

Vladimir : Yes, but you have to decide.

Estragon : True.

Silence.

Vladimir : Help me )

Estragon : I'm trying

Silence.

Vladimir : When you seek you hear.

Estragon : You do

Vladimir : That prevents you from finding.

Estragon : It does.

Vladimir : That prevents you from thinking

Estragon : You think all the same.

Vladimir : No, no impossible.

Estragon : That's the idea, let's contradict each other.

Vladimir : Impossible.

Estragon : You think so ?

Vladimir : We're in no danger of ever thinking anymore

Estragon : Then what are we complaining about

Vladimir : Thinking is not the worst.

Estragon : Perhaps not. But at least there's that

Vladimir : That what ?

Estragon : That's the idea, let's ask each other questions (63-64),

Waiting for Godot begins and ends with pauses and cliches that emphasize the state of stasis, apathy and of nonentity. Dramatic dialogue is presented in reversed order to entail the vicious circle man lives in and to reflect that sense of void and of meaninglessness.

While Beckett adopts the absurdist tradition to stress the difficulty of communication due to man's isolation and alienation, Pinter strenuously warns people against the danger of communication. In his speech to the Seventh National Student Drama Festival in Bristol published in Sunday Times titled "Between the Lines", Pinter furiously says:

> We have heard many times that tired grimy phrase :
>
> Failure of communication, "and this phrase has been fixed to my work quite consistently. I believe the contrary. I think that we communicate only too well. in our silence, in what is unsaid, and that what takes place is continual evasion, desperate rearguard attempts to keep ourselves to ourselves. Communication is too alarming. To enter into someone else's life is too frightening. To disclose to others the poverty within us is too fearsome a possibility (25).

Pinter's delineation of characters in The Caretaker is essentially based on their skill of being reluctant, less articulate and evasive.

Davies' evasive use of language and his retreat to fully unravel his real social background is a case in point. In this connection, Almansi maintains Pinter's method of characterization. He explains :

> Sincerity, honesty, linguistic generosity, openness, are diabolical inventions that must be shunned because they create chaos. Survival is based on a policy of reciprocal misunderstanding and misinformation. If we were to choose a straightforward approach, we would be at the mercy of others, or of language itself, or even worse of ourselves, that part of ourselves we do everything to ignore- and this drive towards self-ignorance is the one intellectual enterprise in which we excel (81).

In his interview with Peter Lewis quoted in Frederick Lumley, New Trends in Twentieth Century Drama : A Survey Since Ibsen and Shaw. Pinter says:

> ... a character on the stage who can present no convincing argument or information as to his past experience, his present behaviour or his aspirations, nor give a comprehensive analysis of his motive, is as legitimate end worthy of attention as one who, alarmingly, can do all these things (270).

In The Caretaker every word, every pause, every sound and every disciplined movement do have dramatic,. socio-political and philosophical implications. In "Between the Lines" Pinter distinguishes between two types of silence :

> Language is a highly ambiguous commerce. So often, below the word spoken, is the thing known

> and unspoken... There are two silences. One when no word is spoken. The other when perhaps a torrent of language is being employed. That is its continual reference (25).

Similar to Beckett's tramps, characters in The Caretaker are presented in isolated areas and in small rooms because, as Pinter states, "it is in quiet places that characters are hidden and simultaneously exposed" ( 25). Pinter's characters retreat not only from the outside world, but also from the word; in an attempt to conceal their acute experiences. This is the case of Davies and Aston who continuously struggle to establish themselves via their quest for identity which is temporally achieved through "peaceful silence of communion" which is ironically contrasted to their final "unnerving silence of menace" in Leslie Kane's words. In this context, considering characters from an ethological perspective, Guide Almansi, in his article "Harold Pinter's Idiom of Lies" comments that the characters, in their territorial struggle for dominance, could be considered as "humanized animals fighting for territory...rather than for sex, or power, or pleasure, or glory or immortality (80) . While Aston withdraws from the world of words to the world of silence in an attempt to attain self-realization through building up a shed, Davies fights for finding a shelter in Aston's room. In the same way, Mick struggles to establish himself by deciding to rebuild the house.

Thus, Pinter's portrayal of characters emphasizes the point that the dramatic components of silence are dominant features of his vision of reality. "Striving for authenticity', Leslie Kane states, "in a world lacking the possibility of verification and clear distinction between what is real and unreal, false and true, Pinter offers an incomplete, unfinished portrait of reality"(107).

In The Caretaker. characters precariously fight for asserting their identity either by attempting to work as a caretaker- thus finding a refuge in the room which belongs to Aston or by attaching to certain objects that keep them in concert with a tactile world as in the case of Aston and Mick. Comparing Davies with Beckett's tramps, James T. Boulton, in his article "Harold Pinter: The Caretaker and other plays", regards him's an archetype of life as a journey. Boulton comments:

> ... by selecting a tramp as his main character he [Pinter] introduces the archetypal symbol of life as a journey. It is not introduced with the formality of Beckett in Waiting for Godot rather the symbol is unobtrusively established by Davies' frequent references to his journeying " on the road" and his repeated requests for shoes ... Furthermore, the symbol is associated with something of the irony that is found in Beckett's life : life may be a journey but for present-day humanity it has no certain destination (98).

The Caretaker begins with a dumb scene of silence in which Mick enters obtrusively to look at the various scattered objects in the room each in turn. Then, on hearing voices coming from outside, he leaves immediately :

> Mick is alone in the room, sitting on the bed. He wears a leather Jacket. Silence.

He slowly looks about the room looking at each object in turn. He looks up at the ceiling, and stares at the bucket. Ceasing, he sits quite still, expressionless, looking out front.

Silence for thirty seconds.

A door bangs. Muffled voices are heard.
Mick turns his head. He stands, moves silently to the
door, goes out, and closes the door quietly.
Silence (7).

At first sight, Mick's silence could be considered as a tacit silence of intrusion because he stimulates various questions in the minds of the audiences as to his character and to his identity. who is he, what does he do? Does the place belong to him ?Is he dumb or not and why does he leave immediately on hearing voices outside the room ? are questions that the audiences may ask to themselves.

Unlike Beckett who intentionally cancels the word for providing characters with the opportunity to remember or to get enthusiasm to communicate, Pinter displaces the word from its familiar context. Also direct questions are elicited by evasive answers as clearly shown in the following dialogue:

Aston : Where are you born ?
Davies : (darkly) what do you mean ?
Aston : Where were you born ?
Davies : I was.... uh ... oh , it's a bit hard, like to
set your mind back.. see what I mean... going
back ... a good way ... lose a bit of track,
like ... you know ... (25).

The following dialogue, though it elicits Davies' inexperience in working as a caretaker, reveals his innermost desire to work. This desire is concealed between the words and signalled by the use of pauses and dots.

Davies : Well, I reckon... Melt, I'd have to know... you
know
Aston : What sort of ... you know ...

Pause.

Davies : Care taking, eh ?

Aston : Yes.

Davies : never done caretaking before,
you know... I mean to say ... I never... what
I mean to say is ... I never been a caretaker
before.

Aston : How do you feel about being one, then ?

Aston : Well, I mean...

Davies : I mean, I'd have to ... I'd have to

Aston : Well, I could tell you ...

Davies : That's ... that's it... you see... you get my
meaning 7(42).

The struggle for domination, which is a typical characteristic of the Pinter characters and which is represented by Davies and Aston is revealed in the following dialogue. It depicts via the repeated use of "I" and you", the characters' separation and menace.

Aston : I . . . I think ' it' a about time you found somewhere
else, I don't think we're hitting it off.

Davies : Find somewhere else ?

Aston : yes.

Davies : Me ? you talking to me ? Not me, man ! you I

Aston : What ?

Davies : You! better find somewhere else!.

Aston : I live here . You don't.

Davies : Don't I ? Well, live here, I been offered a job
here.

Davies : Don't I ? Well, live here, I been offered a job
here(68).

Like Estregon who lives under the illusion of being beaten by others and who finds a shelter behind the tree, Davies complains of the ill-treatment he experienced in his previous job as a cleaner in a cafe and he finds refuge in Aston's room . While Estragon loses his identity because he is forlorn and apparently incapable of meeting Godot to solve his problems, Davies actively seeks his identity because he is homeless and outcast. While Aston finds that he could restore his identity after escaping from the mental hospitai by building a shed and by renewing his house, Davies could restore his identity if he manages, as he said, to go to Sidcup to get; his papers. These aspirations are expressed through pauses which, as Leslie Kane says "effectively freeze the moment and focus attention on a leaking roof ..." (145).

Pointing out a similarity between Pinter end Beckett as to the nature of the thematic aspect of their absurdist approach, Coe comments that, "Pinter... puts logic into the context of psychology. On the level of informational content the statements of his characters are just as doubtful as those of Beckett's " (492).

In The Caretaker, When Davies tells Aston that someone at Sidcup took his papers during the war and he could go to bring them, we are not sure whether he is telling the truth or he is just trying to persuade Aston to keep him in the room:

Aston : Why do you want to get down to Sidcup?

Davies : I got my papers there !

Pause.

Aston : You what ?

Davies : I got my papers there !

Pause.

Aston : What are they doing at Sidcup?

Davies : A man I know has got them. I left them with him- you see they prove who I am ! I can't move without them papers. They tell you who I am. You see ! I'm stuck with them (19-20),

Unlike Beckett who stresses the metaphysical aspect of absurdity in which characters ontologically search for a meaning for life and a true value for existence, Pinter focuses on the socio-political aspect of absurdity within which characters look for shelter, for living and for establishing themselves. Pinter's characters frequently use silences to achieve their ends. In this context, in his book Six Dramatists in Search for a Language :Studies in dramatic Language. , Andrew K. Kennedy explains :

> Pinter's silences are perfectly timed to fit characterization and to create a rhythm, but we do not feel- as we do in Beckett- that language is created out of a silence that is, in the end, all consuming.,.. In sum, Pinter has little of Beckett's intense "meta-physical " anguish, and, again, little of the sheer intensity of feeling that to speak is to suffer and that all language is exhausted. But Pinter has learned to exploit his own sense of language... (171).

Pinter's most distinguished use of natural speech, echoes and objects enables him to produce dramatic situations that lend themselves to diverse meanings and interpretations. Aston occupies himself with the various objects. This suggests, in a sense, the impossibility of communication among characters, hence they resort to frequent pauses, silences and evasion

Pinter employs a type of language which mysteriously reveals his vision, based on considering mystery as an inevitable aspect of human relationship and as an essential ingredient for preserving the human society. In this context, James Boulton writes :

> The language in which Pinter's vision is conveyed is fragmented and staccato, long speeches are rare and even when they occur they consist of brief sentences : indeed the language is appropriate to characters whose sense of security extends no further than the length of a few words. A Pinter character rarely indulges in abstract speculation ... (98).

In The Caretaker, when silence prevails in the dialogue, it represents a threat to characters in their discussion. Being afraid of the development of their speech and of the more use of verbal language, both Aston and Davies pretend that they understand each other. To keep things going on, the silence becomes the appropriate tools of expression. Aston's long narration of his bitter past experience when he was put in a mental hospital where he received electric shocks on his mind and his escape is expressed through " the uneasy silence of impasse", in Leslie Kane's words.

In their struggle for survival and for achieving self-assertion, the characters attempt to conceal their sense of fear and anxiety from nonentity. In The Caretaker, silence turns to be action in itself, for it bridges the gap that mars the characters' struggle to communicate. In this context, Vlarie Minogue, in her article "Taking care of the caretaker", stresses the importance of silence in Pinter's dramatic statement and structure and in the portrayal of characters. "In silence and in the dark", Vlarie says, "is the nonentity against which they all

precariously, struggle" (74). And of the dramatic significance of the leak in the roof and the bucket which catches the drips, Vlarie states:

> ....When silence begins to leak through the battered pores of the speakers, they point to the obvious, to the bucket for instance, catching the drips from the roof. They distract each other ' s attention away from the mundane realities, that are at the same time a symbol of the unsatisfactory state of things...(75).

Characters strenuously resist the threat of silence when it occurs by asking each other cliched questions to break the monotony of silence. "When the silence threatens," Vlarie explains, "one may ask what's your name ? and continue the fight against nonentity. No matter that it has been asked before, and given before, it's still a symbol of stability ..."(75).

The Caretaker ends with a long silence which mysteriously conceals Aston's tacit silence of approval or disapproval of Davies' stay no one knows. His final word as for Davies' destiny before the final fall of the curtain is very suggestive. Discovering Davies' attempt at occupying his room by trying to turn his brother against him to send him back to the mental hospital, thus leaving the room available for him, Aston decides to dismiss Davies from the place. The final long silence envisages Davies' anxiety and fear.

Davies : .... I'11 stay in the same bed, may be if I can get a stronger piece of sacking, like to go over the window, keep out the draught, that '11 do it, what do you say we'll keep it as it is? Pause,

Aston : No.

Davies : Why ... not ?

Aston turns to look at him.

Aston : You Make too much noise.

Davis : But ... but . . . look . . . listen ... listen
here... I mean ....
Aston turns back to the window.
What am I going to do ?
Pause.
What shall I do ?
Pause.
Where am I going to go ?
Pause.
If you want me to go ... I'l l go . You must say the word.
Pause (77-78).

The pauses and the dots as tacit features of silence, indicate the separation, the loneliness and the fear from the future. The silences imply not only Davies' isolation, but also the audiences' sense of fear from mysterious destiny. Commenting on that scene from a socio-political perspective, in her article, " The World of Harold Pinter", Ruby Cohn writes :

> Of all Pinter's plays, The Caretaker makes the most bitter commentary on the human condition; instead of allowing an old man to die beaten, the system insists on tantalizing him with faint hope, thereby immeasurably increasing his final desperate anguish. There is perhaps a pun contained in the title : the caretaker is twisted into a taker on of care, for care is the human destiny (92).

At the end of The Caretaker, Davies, in a last desperate attempt to persuade Aston to condone him, speaks again of his papers through

pauses and dots. In addition, he, like Estragon, fears the others and has the sense of being chased. It is dramatically significant that the final fall of the curtain takes place before Aston says his final word as for Davies' destiny. It mysteriously ends the play. Davies, in a last desperate attempt, says :

> Listen ... if I ... got down... if I was to ... get my papers ... would you ... would you let...would you ... if I got down ... and got my.... Long Silence (78).

In his book Pinter: A Study of his Plays, Martin Esslin stresses the dramatic implications of long silence in this scene and its tremendous impact upon the tramp. He comments:

> This "Long silence" is the death of hope for the old man, Aston's refusal to forgive him, his explusion from the warmth of a home - death. But, as the curtain falls before he is seen to leave, it may also be the long silence before that final word of forgiveness is pronounced : the line with no words in it thus has all the ambiguity and complexity of true poetry and it is also a metaphor of overwhelming power (237 - 238).

In The Caretaker, particularly the final scene of long silence, man's incoherent self is incapable of conveying its acute experiences in verbal utterances. The only way out to speak out these experiences is silence . In this respect, in his book The Pinter Problem, Austin Quigley comments:

> ... it is important to avoid a misunderstanding of the silences that conclude this play. The silence that settles upon each character in turn is not a

> recognition of the limitations of language but of the limitations of self. These characters fall silent not because they find themselves unable to speak but because they recognize that all they can usefully say has already been said. While this recognition is something of an achievement for Mick and a clear defeat for Davies, it remains an ambiguous conclusion for the silent Aston (170).

Pinter's attempt to humanize society and to resist any intention to annihilate the importance of humanity takes a negative dramatic form of dehumanization expressed through silence with its various dramatic components. According to Pinter, the socio-political practices and the society, which fundamentally formulate social and human morality are in themselves special agents for executing man's social and human existence. In this context, Ruby Cohn comments on characterization in Waiting for Godot and The Caretaker. She writes :

> Although Pinter'e God-surrogates are as invisible as Godot, there is no ambiguity about their message. They send henchmen not to bless but to curse, not to redeem but to annihilate. As compared of to the long, dull wait for Godot, Pinter's victims are more swiftly stricken with a deadly weapon- the most brilliant and brutal stylization of contemporary cliche on the English stage today (92).

Beckett's and Pinter's treatment of man and their attitudes towards the human condition are dramatically represented through ontological silence. While ontological silence in Waiting for Godot takes metaphysical and philosophical components, in The Caretaker, it takes psychological and socio-political forms.

While Beckett emphasizes the absurdist aspect of the human condition in a metaphysical framework, Pinter focuses on the epistemological content of absurdity in a social framework . While Waiting for Godot maintains the problem of communication and the difficulty of establishing communication due to the struggle of wills in a spacious universe where time is an instrument of damnation, The Caretaker warns people against developing communication. According to Pinter, the less articulate person with the more painful experience is capable of facing reality and asserting his existence. Therefore, the peaceful silence of communion followed by the dumb silence of apathy and the unnerving silence of menace are dominant tacit features in his theater. Beckett's characters, though they are tramps, they appear to be philosophers who meditate on life and death. Pinter's characters struggle only for survival. Instead of questioning life and death, they are grumbling. Similar to Beckett's tramps, Pinter's have nowhere to go. Davies is lost. He bubbles of shoes to go to Sidcup.

Beckett's and Pinter's enigmatic world of theatre entails the metaphysical and social anguish at the absurdity of the human situation and the nullity of man's attempts to find a meaningful life. Estragon's and Vladimir's long wait for Godot which represents, in a sense, life for them is dramatically presented through their baffled silence of confusion. Via , silence, characters struggle to overcome the desperate state of stasis and nonentity in an attempt to survive. Silence opens and ends the plays in a way that stresses the state of stagnation, of evanescence and of no change. Therefore, while survival, according to Beckett, lurks in man's continuous attempts to find a meaning for existence and a true value for life, Pinter sees that survival lies in deliberate misunderstanding, misinformation and constant evasiveness that lead up for achieving needs and aspirations.

In their dramatic spectacle, Beckett and Pinter use open roads and small rooms which give the sense of being entrapped. This sense of entrapment which is essentially ontological, is dramatically significant, for it exteriorizes the inner psyche of characters, though, they might be silent and evasive, for the purpose of revealing their social, psychological and metaphysical aspirations.

# Chapter III

## Farce in Drama and Off Stage narratives in Utopian Literature

Ever since Aristophanes and Plautus, who were the most skilled playwrights to introduce farce to the Greek and Roman theatre, literary critics have attempted to distinguish farce as a theatrical genre from the other literary forms. In their endeavours they have stressed the technical aspects that dominate the text rather than the thematic principles of farce-thus overlooking one of the essential dramatic functions that could be effected through farce with its subversive nature and pungent manner, namely, socio-political criticism of contemporary society. Dramatically, farce exteriorizes the essence of humanity through critically revealing its follies and social discrepancies.

Farce, which has been historically devalued and dramatically underestimated, is applied, in modern drama, to a full-length play, that hinges on the absurdization of man's follies and social eccentricities. It deals with such themes as marital crises, troubled sexual relations and family quarrels. The essential function of the thematic principles of farce, is to keep an equilibrium between the different components of social structure : between the existing social order and the aspired change, hence achieving the socio-political and psychological function of modern drama.

The main objective of this chapter is to deal with farce as theme and technique with special reference to Alan Ayckbourn's The Norman Conquests trilogy. This is done first, by tracing the historical and dramatic development of farce. Second, by dealing with Ayckbourn's social and dramatic views of the theatre. The aim is to

arrive at the thematic principles of farce that could be implemented in the analysis, interpretation and discovery of the farcical elements in the plays and reveal their social and dramatic significance.

According to The Oxford English Dictionary. the term farce is derived from the Latin "farsa", "farsia" and the related verb "farcire", which metaphorically means "to stuff" (272). The meaning of the Latin verb "farcire" is associated with the nature of the farce form which is episodic and short-thus, it fits the role of filling. In the 13th century, the word farce:

> was applied in France and England to the various phrases interpolated in litanies between the words Keyrie and eleison... to similar expansions of other liturgical formulae; and to expository or hortatory passages in French... which were inserted between the Latin sentences in chanting the epistle (272).

According to The New Encyclopedia Britannica, the term farce was theatrically found in:

> Ancient Greek and Roman theatre, both in the comedies of Aristophanes and Plautus and in the popular Native Italian entertainment Fabula Atellana. in which the actor's played stock character types such as glutton, greybeard and clown...(682).

Throughout the theatrical history, though it has been regarded by critics as a pejorative term, farce appeared in the 15th century French literature to "describe the elements of clowning, acrobatics, caricatures, and indecency found together within a single form of entertainment..." (682). In the 18th and 19th centuries, farce continued

in the works of such writers as "Eugene Labiche in his play An Italian Straw Hat (1851) and George Feydeau in his farce A Flea in Her Ear (1907)" (682).

In the 20th century, farce found expression in such plays as "Charley's Aunt (1892) by Brandon Thomas" (682) and took new formulation in "film comedies with Charlie Chaplin in The Keystone and The Max Brothers" (682). Between the two world wars the farces which were presented at the Aldywch Theatre in London "were enormously popular and numerous successful television comedy shows attest to the durability of the form" (682).

Theatrically, Barbara Cannings defines the farces as "slices of life dramatically and comically distorted but still very close to reality" (558). She proceeds to describe the farces' characters and their dramatic spectacle. She states :

> Their [the farces'] characters... are everyday people anchored in daily life, with names and nicknames ....
>
> Their scenes are the home, the farm, the open road, the market places.... Their subjects are conjugal infidelity, debtors and creditors, petty thieves and Swindlers, family quarrels (558).

Edward Wright, a drama critic who is deeply interested in the subject of farce, traces the historical development of farce and its continuity as a dramatic genre. In Understanding Today's Theatre, Wright states that farce "develops through a series of misunderstanding between the characters involved.... "Farce has been called a purely mathematical sequence of laughs in which the object of the author", says Wright, "is to make the audience believe only for the moment" (1972, 55). He proceeds to observe that the appearance of

farce is connected with the prevalence of cultural and educational activities. He comments:

> It is a paradox that this type of humor has always flourished most in ages of great cultural activity and refinement. The reason lies in the fact that farce, though improbable, is usually based on logic and objectivity, qualities which are an integral part of education and culture (55).

According to Wright, farce is episodic, it does not offer enough time for the audience to think because its incidents come swiftly and, are based on extreme improbability.

> The major dramatic function of farce is not just to entertain the audience with its different classes, but it positively participates through its boisterous features to socio-politically criticize and develop society. In their article "The Ideology of Deception in La Farce de Maistre Pathelin", Carol J, Chase and Marie Sol Ortola through farce. According to the two critics, the special dramatic purpose of farce is to stress the socio-political change that a literary work could do and to release the "tensions and social frustrations and to present, in a vivid and pungent manner, some of the evils of contemporary society" (1986,134).

Discussing the etymology of "farceur", its origin and its double dramatic functions in comedies of highly boisterous spirit, in Drama. Stage and Audience. J.L. Styan stresses the relationship between the

farceur, as a playwright and creator of farce and the farceur, as a comic character. He explains:

> ...in any analysis, the quality of comic style, and thus its meaning, rest finally upon the dramatic event to be put in any form through the type of interpretation the actor sees is perhaps what gives recognition of the fact that the French word farceur connotes the actor as well as the playwright, both creators of farce (1975, 87).

In the farces, the farceurs usually disrupt the social and political restrictions. For this reason, the farceur, as a comic actor, appears as a trouble-maker who deliberately criticizes and violates the existing social and political rules.

Unlike the other forms of comedy, the general atmosphere of farce is characterized by hilarity, unexpected permutations and sudden changes. In this connection, Maurice Charny clarifies the dramatic potentialities of farce:

> In farce anything is possible, and the audience expects surprises, transformations, quick changes of heart... remarkable concealments and discoveries, and a general feeling of wildness and hysteria buildings up a grand, accelerated climax (1978, 97).

Although farce was underestimated in comparison with other dramatic forms, it has established itself through popularity. In their book, Invitation to the Theatre, George and Portia Kernodle state that farce "has been the most popular of all theatre forms for more than two thousand years" (75). Both drama critics stress the popular spirit

of farce, pointing out its socio-political and dramatic features. Most important of its dramatic functions, according to the Kernodles are:

> turning the difficulties, restrictions, frustrations and embarrassments of life into laughter. It relaxes the audience by first tying it into new knots of tension, then exploding the tension into guffaws and roars of delight (72).

Besides its social and psychological functions, farce has a politico-philosophical function implicitly engendered in keeping an equilibrium between the different elements of social reality; between the existing social order and the urgent need for change. In this connection, the Kernodles state that farce:

> ... is a device for accepting the basic incongruity of everyday living, for spanning the ideal and the real without denying either.... In particular, it accepts both the pattern and the impulse to break the pattern. Ultimately, farce does not demand revolutionary change... (76).

Since the subjects of farce rotate around man in an attempt to ridicule and subverse his social follies for the purpose of reform, verbal cruelty is used as a convenient tool for social criticism. Commenting on the major themes of farce and its appropriateness to reveal man's sorrows and distress, J.L. Styan writes:

> ... love and marriage, social forms and other familiar matters are immediately visible in a new way through farce. Its clockwork mechanism by its very consistency disarms us. In its spirit of violence and riot, no doubt we should recognize that hidden

> depths of mind are being revealed. For it is aggressive theatre in that we laugh heartily at the formidable dilemmas in which others find themselves. We exhibit a cruelty as we should never dare do in life, and we yearn for the breaking of rigid social rules as only those who observe them can (83).

According to Oxford Companion to the Theatre, the farce's pivotal dramatic function is to grasp the essence of humanity and to reveal "the grosser faults of mankind; otherwise it degenerates into travesty and burlesque" (308). In modern drama farce is "applied to a full-length play dealing with some absurd situation hinging generally on extra-marital relations-hence the term bedroom farce" (308).

Absurdist situations based on marital crises, sexual troubled relations and family quarrels constitute the major themes of Alan Ayckbourn's The Norman Conquests trilogy. Social troubles, constant quarrels and sexual pursuits are essential motivating forces for they are based on disbeliefs in formal social rules and contracts. These focal points are frequently stressed in the Norman sexual conquests which are ironically contrasted with the historical conquests usually dealt with in historical plays.

> Love affairs in my life are matters of considerable hilarity. Necessarily, this has strictly curtailed not only my close circle of friends but my choice of female companions. Few women care to be laughed at and men not at all, except for large sums of money. All of which leads to the fact that I'm far too fond of the theatre to take it too seriously (9).

Although Ayckbourn was informed by his London sources that "Trilogies ... are not Good Things for the West End" (9), he continued to compose The Norman Conquests, believing that trilogy is the most appropriate dramatic form for formulating his In of sadness. "Ayckbourn looks steadily at people in pain", Malcolm Page states, "and shows that being human having any involvement with others is difficult and fraught with problems" (1982, 44). The dramatic vision of sadness, according to Ayckbourn, could be achieved through farcical elements in the most hilarious situations existent in interrelated dramatic scenes that a trilogy manages to provide.

In The Norman Conquests, what makes Ruth infatuated with Norman, according to Annie, and even according to Ruth herself is "the uncontrollable animal lust that drew them together" (1977, 24). Ayckbourn's emphasis on social problems connected with sexual troubles and marital crises is related, in a sense, to the nature of his own relationship both with men and women and its own impact upon the formulation of his own theatrical attitudes. In his preface to the trilogy, Ayckbourn states:

> Love affairs in my life are matters of considerable hilarity. Necessarily, this has strictly curtailed not only my close circle of friends but my choice of female companions. Few women care to be laughed at and men not at all, except for large sums of money. All of which leads to the fact that I'm far too fond of the theatre to take it too seriously (9).

However, Ayckbourn faced certain challenges in the production of the plays. The first problem is related to the audiences' reluctance to see the plays at one sitting. To solve this problem, he composes each play, though it relates to the other two, independently,

in a way that could be staged and seen by itself. Second, producing the plays at Scarborough, a small town people intend to visit in holidays, Ayckbourn found that it was impossible for the audiences to come and give three nights of their visit to the town to see the trilogy.

To overcome the obstacles of production, in his Preface to The Norman Conquests, Ayckbourn elucidates his dramatic style:

> I decided in the case of The Norman Conquests to write them crosswise. That is to say, I started with Scene One of Round and Round the Garden, then the Scene One's of the other two plays and so on through the Scene Two's. It was an old experience writing them, rather similar to Norman's own in fact. I found myself grappling with triplet sisters all with very different personalities. Climaxes, comic ones, naturally, seemed abound everywhere. Hardly had I finished dealing with the fury of Reg's game [Living Together] than I was encountering a frenzied Sarah trying to seat her guests [Table Manners] or Ruth beating off the advances of uncharacteristically amorous Tom [Round and Round the Garden]... each play, although dealing with the same characters and events,-began to develop a distinct atmosphere of its own (12-13).

In his conversation with Ian Watson, Ayckbourn considers The Norman Conquests as his "big achievement and it was that which led on to Absent Friends"(114). He focuses on his dramatic vision which is centered round human principles in that "people should treat each other well. And unfortunately, in this world, it is getting more

and more difficult to treat people nicely, because the suspicions are growing rather than diminishing" (114).

In his portrayal of characters, Ayckbourn focuses on "the very unpleasant side of them" (114). "All my characters': says Ayckbourn in his conversation with Ian Watson, "have flaws and are pock-marked, and I don't do a cosmetic job on them" (114). He significantly employs the element of contrast to create tension and conflict. In his dramatic spectacle Ayckbourn focuses on gardens, picnics and meals where people are "willy nilly forced to sit opposite each other and possibly exchange conversation" (115).

The punning title of The Norman Conquests attracts the audience to see the plays as historical dramas, but they actually depict the constant attempts of the central character Norman, to sexually conquer the three sisters who, at the end, when united, turn their backs on him to be left alone in despair and isolation.

Crucial to Ayckbourn's humanist views encompassed in his plays is the involvement of many women characters in his dramas. He precisely envisages their arguments, tricks and deceptions and, stresses their rights to practise the socio-political activities unbound by any social restrictions. This is based on Ayckbourn's emphasis on the human dimensions regardless of gender. According to him farce, as a comic form, is the appropriate expedient to subversively criticize the two sexes' follies-and unpleasant sides. Ayckboun's views towards society, woman and theatre as expressed through farce are consistent with the Kernodles' vision of the civilized society which can be effected through high comedy. Both drama critics write:

> Civilized society does not exist until women can freely participate as equals of men. A mixed society

> adds warmth to intellectual discussion and permits the impersonal appreciation of the opposite sex. In the theatre, high comedy did not develop until women became important as characters, until Moliere and Shakespeare brought them in to confront men, outwit them in deception and stand up to them proudly and independently (79).

Laughter arises from farce that leads to reciprocal understanding between the actors and the audience. Therefore, Aychbourn cares a great deal for the audience. His sole aim is to make them laugh. To sustain that point, Oleg Kerensky quotes Ayckbourn who states,"I am towards the audience to do something to them. And I want to move further into the Chekhovian field, exploring attitudes to death, loneliness, etc-themes not generally dealt with in comedy" (1977, 129).

Stressing Ayckbourn's theatrical elements which are used as special tools for socio-political criticism, Harold Hobson states:

> The things that the public most appreciates in Ayckbourn - the jokes, the Leger-de-main, the farce, the high spirits - are all worth appreciating. They are first class theatre (6).

In 1973, the year of the composition of Ayckbourn's The Norman Conquests, Michael Billington, a drama critic, claimed in his review on "Alan Ayckbourn" published in James Vinson's Contemporary Dramatists, that Ayckbourn's "sole aim is to make us laugh. His plays contain no messages, offer no profound vision of the universe, tell us nothing about how to live our lives" (56). Billington's view disregards the special message of Ayckbourn's farces which

viably aims at uncovering the hidden recesses of human nature, to allow man's sorrows and distress the opportunity to find expression in thoughtful laughter. He seems to forget that the pivotal dramatic function of farce, which is quite close to social and psychological reality, is to figure out through giggling, man's inhibited wishes. To substantiate that point, Erich Bentley states that "like dreams farces show the disguised fulfillment of repressed wishes" (1958, x).

Later, in 1974 Billington, in his assessment of Ayckbourn's dramatic themes published in The Guardian. admits the theatrical and socio-political implications of Ayckbourn's farces. He comments:

> Ayckbourn is a left-wing writer using a right wing form; and even if there is nothing strident, obvious or noisy about his socialism: it is none-the-less apparent that he has a real detestation for the money-grubber, the status-seeker and the get-rich quicker (11).

Theatrical formative influences upon Ayckbourn's theatrical statements and structures are traceable in his farces in general and in The Norman Conquests in particular. In his treatment of marital problems, love, jealousy, sexual pursuits and lust, Ayckbourn shows his adherence to the modern French farceur, George Feydeau whose plays tackle confusions of marital and social problems. "His (Ayckbourn's) picture of marital life is almost as savage as those painted by Osborne and Whitehead", says Kerensky, "but it is deceptively framed in cosiness" (126). To emphasize the influence of Feydeau as well as of Chekhov upon the formulation of Ayckbourn's dramatic output, Ronald Hayman, in an interview with Ayckbourn quoted in his book, British Theatre Since 1955 concludes that:

> Having written his early farces under the influence of Feydeau, Ayckbourn began to feel at the beginning of the Seventies that he wanted to put Chekhovian characters into an absurd framework. But Checkhov contrived a brilliantly judged mixture of absurdity and pathos as the framework for the existence of his character, while Ayckbaurn's. well observed and entertaining though they are, get put into situations too patently contrived (1979, 69)

Furthermore , "Ayckbourn", Oleg Kerensky argues, "admits to having been influenced by conventional writers like Coward and Rattigan as well as by Pinter " (130). Like Coward, Ayckbourn finds in farce an appropriate medium that provides the playwright with the opportunity to dramatize the aggressive and cruel attitude of the husband towards his mother-in-law, a theme which is dramatically relevant to The Norman Conquests. As for the Pinterean impact upon Ayckbourn's formulation of his dramatic language, Kerensky quotes Ayckbourn who states, "some aspects of Pinter appear in my work especially a love for the bizarre use of the English language (130-131).

The Norman Conquests consists of three plays, picturing the same people and taking place in a country cottage on the same week end. In Table Manners, the first play, characters are preoccupied with artificialities at times of meals and parties. For instance, Sarah has a very domineering character. She is very sick with discipline and propriety. Her innermost desire is to keep the members of the family in the order she assigns for them. Throughout the trilogy, Sarah's dogmatic character is revealed through farcical scenes.

In the dining room of her mother-in-law's cottage which represents the dramatic spectacle of Table Manners, Sarah appears

fixing a place for every member. Norman, the social anarchist, appears to turn things upside down. Instead of sitting in the place assigned for him he sits in the place he likes, between Reg and Tom. Sarah furiously shrieks at him saying "...it's wrong" (68) and the following dialogue lakes place:

Norman   Wrong? Is it wrong to sit between my old pal Reg and this dwarf on my left? [patting the top of Tom's head]. Hello little chap.

Tom:   Hallo.

Ruth:   [hissing] Norman.

Sarah:   Norman!

Annie:   It's all right, Sarah. I'll sit here. It's fine.

Sarah:   But-

Annie:   This is fine.

Reg:   Fine.

Ruth:   Fine

Sarah:   Oh, well It's not correct.

Norman:   Is this lettuce leaf all for me? I can hardly believe my good fortune.

Annie:   [hissing] Norman (68).

In his conversation with Ian Watson, Ayckbourn comments on Sarah's dogmatism which is based on hiding certain needs. He sees that "Sarah attempts to have an embassy banquet in that naff house, with only lettuce in the fridge -serves her right, really" (116). And on Ian Watson's comment that Sarah is "surely protecting herself from any sort of relationship with anyone by hiding within the form" (116), Ayckbourn explains:

> ...the best thing to do is to formalise it all with everyone sitting around the table, well dressed, and

having jolly conversation And then you can be reassured that everything is normal, because the one person who is about to crash is her. She fancies Norman more than any of them, so she's fighting herself she's also fighting the sins of her sisters-in-law. She's really trying to touch a safe base; and the safe base is rolled napkins, and knives and forks, and man-woman-man-woman, and: "Hasn't it been a lovely day?" (116).

Being sick with discipline, and artificial in her behaviour with others, Sarah insists on cleaning her house again though she left it clean before leaving to visit her mother-in-law on the week end. This is expressed through her farcical dialogue with Reg, her husband :

Reg: You cleaned it before we left. Nobody's been in it since. How can it have got dirty?

Sarah: It's been standing for a whole week-end. Anyway, Mrs. Bridges to clean tomorrow. I want to make sure it's clean before she does (82).

The confused married relationship between Sarah and Reg is farcically stressed through Reg's strange behaviour. One of his bizarre social acts which more or less reveals his troubled married relationship is connected with Sarah's condemnation of his behaviour before the school headmistress. "It's me that's left king stupid in front of the headmistress," says Sarah, "when I forget the names of our own children" (35).

Sarah's artificiality and her pigheaded mind which is attached to trivial silly conventions is expressed through farce. In the dining room which represents the setting of Living Together, Sarah insists on

making coffee herself and, quarrels with Annie who intends to **serve** the guests:

Sarah: Will you please give me that coffee pot?

Annie: What's the use of -

Sarah: Annie, will you give me that coffee pot at once **or I** shall lose my temper?

Annie : [thrusting the pot at Sarah] Oh, go on have the **damn** thing then. [She sits sulkily.]

Sarah: Thank you. [Recovering her composure] Now **then,** everyone. Black or white?

Peg: I should heat it up first. It'll be cold by now.

Sarah: [ignoring him) Tom?

To m: Um?

Sarah: Coffee? Tom: Oh, thanks very much.

Sarah: Thank you, Tom. Black or white?

Tom : Um ... [A pause]

Sarah: Annie?

Annie: No, thank you.

Sarah: Oh, don't be so silly.

Annie: None for me. I couldn't drink it.

Sarah: Reg?

Tom: Black, I think.

Sarah: I'm, asking Reg.

Tom: Oh. Sorry.

Reg: White.

Sarah: Please.

Peg: Please.

Sarah: At last. White for Reg. Black for Tom.
None for Annie.

Tom: I think I'l l change mine to white [Sarah gives him aglare. Norm an snores] (118 – 119).
Torn. None for Annie.

Due to their maladjustment, characters bizarrely behave. Their strange behaviour is dramatically represented via verbal aggression which is employed as a dramatic method of transforming characters into mere objects in the hands of their dramatist with the purpose of ridiculing their eccentricities. For instance, the maverick conjugal relationship between Ruth and Norman is expressed through verbal violence that reveals the savage image of their marital relationship which could viably be traced in the following dialogue:

Ruth: Sarah, dear, I've been married to Norman
for five years. I have learned through
bitter experience that the last thing to do
with Norman is to take him seriously.
That's exactly what he wants....

Sarah: I'm amazed you've stayed with him. I
really am.

Ruth: Well, I don't really look at it that way. I
rather think of him as staying with me.
After all, I make all the payments on the
house, most of the furniture is mine... it
has crossed my mind, in moments of
extreme provocation, to throw him out...
It's a bit like owning an oversized
unmanageable dog, being married to
Norman (194-195).

Due to his sensual character and because of his strange use of language. Ruth cruelly described Norman as a dog. "A dog is at least, animate," says Blistein, "when Ruth has a conversation with Annie about Norman, she now compares him to something inanimate, a book (1983,31).

In her dialogue with Ruth, Annie attempts to defend her relationship with Norman. But Ruth expresses her indifferent and rather inhuman attitude towards Norman via verbal aggression:

Annie: I'm sorry. I never for a minute intend to take Norman away from you or anything.

Ruth: Forget it. You couldn't possibly take Norman away from me. That assumes I own him in the first place. I've never done that. I always feel with Norman that I've him on loan from somewhere. Like one of his library books. I'11 get a card one day informing me he's overdue and there is a fine to pay on him (63-64).

Appearing rather indifferent and showing no objection to Ruth's verbal violence against him, Norman makes the same comparison when he intends to take Annie away to East Grinstead on the week-end. In this connection, Sarah irrationally accuses him of stealing Annie from Tom.

Norman: I wasn't stealing her. I was borrowing her.
For the week end.

Sarah: Make her sound like one of your library books.

Norman: She was borrowing me too. It was mutual.
It was friendly loan. We never intend to upset anybody.
We both agreed. That was the joy of it, don't you see?
Nobody need ever Co have known (98).

In connection with Tom's misunderstanding of the other characters in the trilogy, a series of farcical scenes is traceable. For example, when a confrontation takes place between Norman and Ruth in the presence of Annie and Reg, Tom believes that Norman is doing wrong to Annie. He sends him an unexpected blow that makes him fall off the chair.

Norman: What did you do that for?

Tom: I did warn you. I said if you upset Annie anymore, I'm afraid I can't sit by and have her called names by you.

Norman: What names?

Tom: Well, you called her a - tea bag or something. That's not on - I won't have that.

Norman: You fool. I wasn't talking to her.

Tom: What?

Norman: I was talking to my wife (76-77).

However, Norman attempts to widen Tom's scope of understanding the nature of living with the Normans when he says: "There's nothing they like better in this family than a good laugh. Go on. Bring an atmosphere of merriment into the room" (110). Norman's emphasis on laughter as a source of knowing more about the other characters is due to Ayckbourn's major aim of stimulating thoughtful laughter which is rewarding when it comes as a natural outcome of the mutual understanding between the actors and the audience.

This theatrical element of laughter is dramatically implemented in connection with Tom who frequently appears as an object of laughter; both in relation to his job as a vet, and to his behaviour as character. Although Tom is a veterinarian, he is not proficient enough to cure his animals. His patients always escape from him including Annie's cat who, being afraid of Tom, keeps standing on the tree

throughout the trilogy. This characteristic of Tom is farcically presented in the words of Norman.

Norman: ... look at that cat up there. He's still up

> that tree, Tom was trying to get down. He can't be much of a vet. What sort of a vet are you? When terrifying your patients into climbing trees? (97).

In addition, Reg keeps laughing and joking at Tom, For instance, when Tom says that he is in a hurry to treat a horse, the following dialogue takes place:

Tom: Not too serious. She can wait.

Reg: Let her stand on three legs for a bit [He laughs]

Tom: No, she can stand all right (85).

Although Tom appears as an object of laughter and joking nearly for all the members of the family, he stands as a conscious witness and a meticulous observer of the sorrows and distress of the characters, especially Norman. This point is stressed in Tom's dialogue with Reg after realizing that Norman is heavy drunk:

Tom: ...he's had nearly a bottle. Drowning his sorrows, I suspect.

Sarah: Why can't they see behind them?

Reg: Because they can't that's why?

Tom: Motto, don't drive behind a police car.

Norman [loudly for a second]: Love? What do you know about love...? [with an apologetic look at the others, continuing in a lower tone].

Have you ever felt love for a single human being in your life?

Reg: The police also have the Chief superintendent. [Holding him up] This chap... he can see up to three spaces round a corner...

Tom: Useful chap in a crisis.

Sarah: Oh, this is absurd.

Reg: What's absurd?

Sarah: How can you have a man see three spaces ahead and three round a corner?

Reg: Because he's got a very long neck. I don't know, it's a game, woman.

Sarah: It's not even realistic.

Reg: What's that got to do with it?

Sarah: It's not much of a game if it's not even realistic.

Reg: What are you talking about? Realistic? [Leaping up] What about a chess? That's not realistic, is it? What's wrong with chess?

Sarah: Oh well, chess...

Reg: In chess, you' ve got horses jumping sideways. That's not realistic, is it? Have you ever seen a horse jumping sideways?

Sarah: Yes, all right.. (125-126).

Crucial to the subject of farce in The Norman Conquests is the troubled relationship between the husband and his mother-in-law. During his phone call with his wife, Norman appears very rude to his mother-in-law. He jiggles the receiver and, rings the bell in her bedroom while she was sleeping. This is dramatically represented in the following dialogue:

Norman: Ruth! Hallo... Mother, will you please get off this line?

Annie: Oh, my God. He jiggled the receiver...

Norman: Mother!

Annie: He rang the extension bell in Mother's bedroom.

Norman: [into the phone] Look-would you shut up, both of you, for a minute and let me get a word in... Mother, if you don't hang up, I'll come and sort you out personally (126).

Infidelity and family quarrels are not confined to the married couples but they also include violent attitudes of the daughters towards their mother. Although their ailing mother does not appear on the stage, we come to know about her through her daughters. Ruth, her eldest daughter says that Annie is no longer capable of coping with that "evil woman upstairs" (130)..., "She never liked me, I never liked her. Mutual" (130). Annie, her youngest daughter says that her mother's life "was centered round men. When they lost interest in her, she lost interest in herself' (133).

Such clichéd words as "I want to make everyone happy" which Norman continuously repeats throughout the trilogy create an atmosphere of absurdity that hovers over the The Norman Conquests. It entails the stupidity of the farceur that entraps him into constant troubles with his own environment. His appearance adds to his absurdist and farcical manner. For instance, although the weather is hot in July, Norman wears "a grimy mac and woolly hat" (163). In addition his magnetic animalism consistent with his diabolical character when he says:

> It's on a night such as this that all the old base instincts of primitive man, the hunter, come flooding up. You long to be away-free-filled with the wage to rape and pillage and conquer (191).

Round and Round the Garden. which takes place in the garden, marks a development in the characters of Norman and Ruth. Farcical situations in this play are connected with Norman's strange behaviour and Tom's constant misunderstanding of the other characters' intentions. Trying his new pyjamus on a garden statue, Norman's appearance with is bare legs astonished not only Tom but also the other members of the family.

In her attempts to direct Tom to attract Annie to him, Ruth is misunderstood and a scene of hilarity recurs. Tom believes that Ruth confesses her own love to him while in reality she attempts to encourage him to infatuate Annie. Commenting on that scene, Oleg Kerensky states that "it ends with Norman and Annie on the ground in an embrace, Tom and Reg discussing motor cars, Tom telling Ruth he loves her, and Sarah shrieking at all of them" (124).

Reviewing characters in The Norman Conquests via providing a panoramic view of each character in relation to the other characters, Elmer Blistein comments:

> The three plays present six characters in search not of an author but of something less tangible. Annie, the spinster, seeks love and escape... Ruth, the myopic sister ... is looking for continuing success in her never described career. Reg, their brother, really wants little out of life. He merely wants some people to play the board games he invents and an occasional person to laugh at his jokes as he is willing to laugh at others. Sarah, his shrewish, dominating wife ... seeks perfection in an imperfect world.... Tom... is a kindly but dim soul who prefers animals to people, but who likes Annie and needs

> some body to direct him into her arms. And finally there is Norman,.. whose "Conquests" are ironically chronicled, and not merely in the tide. In the social spectrum ... he is a social anarchist persuaded that social contracts are for other people, not him (28-29).

Thus, although farce, as a literary genre, devalued and theatrically underestimated, its popularity for more than two thousand years has asserted its socio-political and dramatic significance. It has become an appropriate dramatic method of socio-political criticism.

In a farce, social and political criticism of contemporary society is presented on the stage, in a way that could not possibly be expressed in real life. Hence, farce becomes a legitimate expedient for criticizing the socio-political discrepancies, thus achieving the social role of contemporary theatre that could be implemented in the farce genre whose essential purpose is not just to entertain the audience via joking and laughter, but it strenuously aims, through its subversive nature, at achieving the inevitable change. It is a leveling tool for breaking the dogmatic and rigid social rules. It works as a go-between the real and the ideal, the existing socio-political structure and the yearning for change.

To avoid burlesque and travesty, farce rotates around man with the purpose of digging deep down into his inward world through hilarity to grasp the human essence.

Formative theatrical influences upon Ayckbourn's dramatic spectacle are observed in connection with Ayckbourn's adherence to Feydeau, Coward, Rattigan, Osborne, Whitehead and Pinter.

In The Norman Conquests, Ayckbourn finds in farce an appropriate vehicle for tackling such themes as love, marriage, and

in a farcical framework, are of universal appeal. Conjugal infidelities, family quarrels and marital problems are major themes of the trilogy that are presented through the principal character, Norman who is not a historical figure, but a farceur who sexually attempts to conquer the three sisters with the purpose of violating marriage as a social phenomenon.

Ayckbourn adopts a humanitarian attitude in The Norman Conquests, through focusing on the nature of people's behaviour and treatment of one another. He also believes in a mixed society in which men and women could positively participate in social and intellectual discussions. To reveal two sexes' follies and discrepancies, Ayckbourn uses verbal violence as a theatrical method to criticize pride, deception and wickedness.

Being objective and logical, farce is theatrically implemented as a safety valve for ventilating the deeply repressed feelings and psychological inhibitions through the purposive joking and laughter, hence satisfying certain appetencies within the individual. This will naturally be reflected upon society, thus achieving the socio-psychological function of drama encapsulated in farce as a literary genre.

In his writings in general and in Chicken Soup Trilogy in particular, Arnold Wester seeks an alternative socialist community where man could live in harmony with himself and with society. By so doing, Wesker shows his adherence to nineteenth century tradition of attempting to find alternative communities, to concretise utopian thought. In this respect, Dennis Hardy writes :

> ... alternative communities can be seen as attempts to implement utopian visions. Whereas communities are immediate and practical attempts to change reality, utopias remain as dreams of the imaginary society-the one is rooted in possibility, the other in fantasy (1).

Essential to the treatment of Wesker's vision of utopia in his plays is the use of such technical devices as flash backs versus flash forwards, debates, running jumps into the future, off stage narrative events, symbols, memory as medium of recalling the past and dumb movements as dramatic forms of expression.

The theme of withdrawal from city life, with its industrial system and capitalist exploitation, and the preference to life in the country, which is a typical feature of the nineteenth century mind, is to be traced in Wesker's ideal thought and dramatized in the plays. In his book Fears of Fragmentation, Wesker expounds :

> Somewhere in the total history of man, in his thought and his actions and his hopes, there is a delicately woven vision of a just and beautiful society: and if most religions, philosophies and political ideologies could be analysed in incredible detail then this vision would be found to hold them more in common than in conflict (110).

Emphasizing Wesker's implementation of the tradition of alternative communities in his writings, Heinz states:

> By facing up to the dual nature of the utopian concept in his writing and in his political practice in the foundation of Centre 42, Wesker anticipated as

> early as the fifties and a movement which for the rest of society commenced only around the mid-sixties with a wave of new utopian communities trying out alternative ways of living (186).

Wesker's attack on the capitalist system is related to his constant attempts to liberate the working class from ignorance by enlightening them through theatre, as a socio-political forum.

Imbued with the nineteenth century utopian ideals of such socialist thinkers as William Morris and Robert Owen and his thorough consciousness of the bureaucratic and exploiting system of the British Labour Party, Wesker manages to dramatize his utopian vision in Chicken Soup Trilogy

William Morris' impact upon Wesker's socialist thought is manifested in his attempt to avoid fragmentation, not only in art and society, but also within the individual. It is also apparent in Wesker's repudiation of the capitalist system, for it is the cause of men's alienation and isolation. In this respect, Wesker believes that "to wish to communicate his (artist's) experience of the human condition indifferent to the existence of such a vision is to reduce what should be art to the barren telling of anecdotes outside the city wall" (110).

Heinz stresses the relationship between Morris and Wesker with respect to the nature of their attitudes towards capitalism and its negative impact upon the individual and society. He states:

> With Morris, Wesker blames the capitalist method of production and the resulting order of society for this ubiquitous fragmentation. Without their abolition, all other efforts must remain "patch work". They take away the Worker's freedom of self

> determination and so shatter their identities. The competitive system estranges one worker from another, and the class system, with its hatred, alienates whole parts of the society from one another (187).

Talking of Robert Owen's utopian ideals of socialism crystallized in new ideal societies, Hardy states:

> Owen's activities extended over most of the first half of the nineteenth century to embrace, in turn, a variety of roles--philanthropic factory reformer, theoretician of the new society and practical community builder, early trade unionist and pioneer of the cooperative movement (24).

Owen's influence upon Wesker is crystallized in Centre 42, which reveals the practical implementation of Wesker's utopian thought in the education of the working class. In pointing out Wesker's fundamental interest in the problems of the workers, Heinz states:

> With Centre 42, Wesker certainly attempted to bring about a basic change in the relationship between his theatre and its patrons, and to create a community theatre or play to working class audiences in factories (190).

Unlike other utopians, who dealt with utopia in symbolic and metaphorical ways, Wesker attempted to implement his utopian vision in his plays, though utopia might only be achieved at an individual level.

Chicken Soup Trilogy was composed at a time when there were remarkable radical changes in the social and political situation in

England during the late fifties and sixties. That situation resulted in a new wave in English drama elucidated in the words of Heinz:

> .... The Labour Party's unimaginative and pragmatic policy of reforms, the integration into the establishment once it had taken over the government, and its sacrifice of socialist ideals for the practical realization of the Welfare State-as well as the latter's bureaucratic excesses-generated not only a highly dissatisfied New Left, but also the New Drama (185).

In Chicken Soup with Barley, the first part of the trilogy Wesker establishes a link between the English historical situation during the thirties and the fifties with the aim of revealing the essential causes of the miserable conditions of the working classes at present. The characters show constant struggle to adapt to the existing social and political order. Their inability to conform results in their isolation and alienation. In pointing out the reasons that prevent the characters from adapting themselves, Bigsby points out:

> Arnold Wesker ... was struck by the failure of his own times to conform to the ideological neatness of prewar battles between fascism and progressive forces. In Chicken Soup with Barley, he projects his characters into that past, as many of the socialist playwrights of the seventieth were to do. But for the most part, his characters are shown struggling to locate themselves against a form of alienation expressed through, but not originating in, class divisions. Despite the implied confidence in an

> emerging personal and class identity, in reality his plays tend to undermine their own premises (394).

Chicken Soup, with Barley covers twenty years in the life of a Jewish family, living in the East End of London, and showing their antagonistic reactions to the existing social and political system, not only in England, but also in the world. Characters, with their different degrees of conscipusness, stress, in their preparation to fight against Mosely's Blackshirts, who were fascists, particular social and political issues. The play opens with Dave's invitation of the Kahns to know about the political plans:

> DAVE: Comrades! You want to know what the plans are or you don't want to know? Again. As we don't know what's going to happen we've done this: some of the workers are rallying at Royal Mint street-so if the Fascists want to go through the Highway they'll have to fight for it.
>
> But we guess they'll want to stick to the main route so as not to lose face-you follow7 We've therefore called the main rally at Gardiner's corner. If, on the other hand, they do attempt to pass up Cable Street-
>
> SARAH: Everything happens in Cable Street.
>
> HARRY: What else happened in Cable Street?
>
> SARAH: Peter the Painter had a fight with Churchill there, didn't he?
>
> MONTY: You thinking of Sidney Street sweetheart.
>
> HARRY: You know, she gets everything mixed up.

SARAH: You're very wonderful I suppose, yes? Y|ou're the clever one!

HARRY: I don't get my facts mixed up, anyway.

SARAH: Per, per, per, perl Listen to him! My politician

MONTY: Sarah, do me a favour, leave the fists till later.

DAVE: If, on the other hand, they do try to coma up Cable Street then they'll meat some dockers and more barricades. And if any get through that lot then they still can't hold their meetings either in Salmon Lane or Victoria Park Square.

SARAH: Why not?

PRINCE: Because since seven this morning there's been some of our Comrades standing there with our platforms.

MONTY: Bloody wonderful, isn't it? Makes you feel proud, the Sarah? Every section of this working class area that we've approached has responded. The dockers at Lime house have come out to the man. The lot!

PRINCE: The unions, the Go-ops, Labour Party members and the Jewish People Council-

SARAH: The Board of Deputies7

HARRY: There she goes again. Not the Jewish board of Deputies-they asked the Jewish population to keep away. No. the Jewish people's Council--the one that organized that mass demonstration against Hitler some years back (8-9).

Dave seeks to unite the working class of the Jews under one umbrella to fight against Hosely's Fascist Party which aims at encroaching upon the Jewish community, for it was directed by Hitler who aimed at getting-rid-of the Jews for they backed the communists (13).

Wesker's emphasis on the elements of the ideal socialist community, where solidarity, justice, freedom and equality permeate is quite apparent in Dave's decision to join the Spanish Civil War and in the attitude of the Kahns towards him. In his dialogue with Monty about war in Spain, Dave states:

> .... The war in Spain is not a game of cards, Monty. You don't pay in pennies when you loss. Hay they lose many morel What kind of talk is that Sometimes Monty, I think you only enjoy the battle, and that one day you'll forget the ideal. You hate too much. You can't have brotherhood when you hate. There's only one difference between them and us. We know what we're fighting for. It's almost an unfair battle (13).

Dave's socialist ideal of brotherhood and justice encompassed in his involvement in the Spanish Civil War as volunteer against Fascism is reinforced by the Kahns' attitude towards him. This is quite apparent in Harry's talk with Sarah:

> HARRY: I understand you Dave-I know what you mean, boy. what do you want we should say? You go. We're proud of you. You stay behind.We love you. Sometimes you live in a way you don't know why--You just do a thing. (13-14).

And Sarah confirms Harry's words by saying: "He's (Harry) right, Dave" (14).

In his definition of socialism, Harry states that it might not be achieved at present, and according to him, solidarity and warmth are essential for achieving the utopian ideal.

HARRY: I tell you show a young person what socialism means and he recognizes life! A Future! But it won't be pure in our lifetime, you know that, don't' you, boys' Now even in hers, maybe - [referring to Ada] but in her children's lifetime (14).

Ada's utopian ideals are manifested in her antagonistic attitudes towards industrialism and life in the city where the capitalist system with its exploitation permeates.

ADA: The only rotten society is an industrial society. It makes a man stand on his head and then convinces him he is good-looking (34-35).

Again, in her dialogue with Sarah, Ada condemns her mother's positive attitude towards city life:

> You have never cried against the jungle of an industrial society. You've never wanted to destroy its values--simply to own them yourselves. It only seemed a crime to you that a man spent all his working hours in front of a machine because ha did not own that machine. Heavens! the glory of owning a machine! (35)

Ada's devotion to the Morrisian principles is represented in her decision to withdraw from city life and live in the country. After

Dave's return from Spain, Ada intends to dedicate herself to arts and craftsmanship in the country. In her dialogue with Ronnie, Ada States:

> ... When Dave comes back we shall leave London and live in the country. That'll be our socialism. Remember this, Ronnie: the family should be a unit and your work and your life should be part of one existence (33).

Being disappointed and feeling the bitter sense of isolation and alienation, Ada, in her dialogue with Sarah, states:

> I'm tired, mother. I spent eighteen months waiting for Dave to return from Spain and now I've waited six years for him to come home from a war against Fascism and I'm tired. Six years in and out of offices, auditing books and working with young girls who are morons--lip sticked, giggling morons... (34).

Like Ada, Ronnie is so enthusiastic to his socialist ideals manifested in his hatred of capitalism, exploitation and industrialism. He finds in Dave and Ada good models for providing him with their socialist ideals. Therefore, when Dave's project fails in the third part of the trilogy, Ronnie is disappointed and frustrated.

Ronnie seeks to achieve his utopian ideals via his constant attempts to change people including Harry, his father. In this respect, Harry, in his dialogue with Ronnie, states:

> .... Neither you nor your mother will change me. It's too late now: I'm an old man and I've been the same all my life so I will always be. You can't alter people, Ronnie. You can only give them Bone love and hope they'll take it (49).

After his traumatic experience in Hungary where he was working as a cook in a kitchen, Ronnie is provided with a realistic image of the people and their philistine interests. Their relationships, which are merely based on money and devoid of any sense of human understanding, frustrated Ronnie in the course of his constant attempts to seek healthy, peaceful and warm human relationships. He states:

> I hated-the-kitchen! People coming and going and not staying long enough to understand each other. Do you know what I finally discovered--it's all my eye! This notion of earning an honest penny is all my eye. A man can work a whole lifetime and when he is sixty-five he considers himself rich if he has saved a thousand pounds (64).

In his dialogue with Sarah after his return from Hungary, Ronnie expresses his disillusionment and frustration:

> RONNIE (angrily): What has happened to all the comrades,
>
> Sarah? I even blush when I use that word. Comrades? Why do I blush? Why do I feel ashamed to use words like democracy and freedom and brotherhood? They don't have meaning anymore (65).

Emphasizing Ronnie's negative attitude towards the kitchen as a metaphor of misery and inhumanity, Best and Cohen states:

> The kitchen was to him an awful warning of the dehumanizing effect that this kind of work can have on a person. He now sees employment as a gigantic swindle which takes the whole joy out of life and

> gives you at most a paltry sum of money saved at the end of it. But worse than this is his wretchedness of finding that the socialist ideal is not the answer to the world's problems ... (231).

Willing to quit his political mission, Ronnie sees that the language of politics turns to he meaningless. In this respect, Best and Cohen explain:

> Ronnie is ready to give up the struggle, as his father did before him. Because his disillusion is so painful he blames his mother for it, for she passed on to him the beliefs which have now collapsed for him (231).

On the other hand, Sarah, the political activist, who constantly fights against the powers that stand in her way of attempting to have a unified image of her utopian ideals, reveals her political commitments to Ronnie:

> All my life I worked with a party that meant glory and freedom and brotherhood. You want me to give it up now. You want me to move to Hendon and forget who I am? If the electrician who comes to mend my fuse blows it instead, so I should stop having electricity? I should cut off my light? Socialism is my light, can you understand? A man can be beautiful and fighting and jealousy-I've got to have light and love (67-68).

In comparing the characters of Sarah and Harry, John Russel Taylor expounds:

> Sarah is ... the dominant figure in the household; she is politically active, forever helping to organize

> demonstrations and arranging the lives of those around her according to Marxist-Leninist principles. Harry, her husband, is weak-willed and totally unconcerned with politics, all he wants is a quiet life without worries (150).

In Roots, the second part of the trilogy, Ronnie, though he never appears, is always there, in the way Beatie speaks and behaves. A great deal of his character is revealed to the Bryants as well as to the audience through Beatie. In her dialogue with Jenny, Beatie says:

> Be (Ronnie) was interested in all the things I never even thought about. About politics and art and all that, and he tried to teach me. He's a socialist and he used to say you couldn't bring socialism to a country by making speeches, but perhaps you could pass it onto someone who was near you (84).

Ronnie's political thought and utopian aspirations are lived through by the Bryants, particularly Beatie who assimilates his utopian ideals. While Ronnie passes on his ideals to Beatie, he attains his own inspiration from Ada and Dave. While Ronnie came to know about socialism, brotherhood and equality from Dave, Deetie came to know about the utopian ideals of building up an ideal socialist society from Ronnie. This is an indication of Hesker's emphasis on the possibility of passing the utopian ideals on from one generation to the other throughout human history and on his insistence on its continuity.

Assimilating what has been said to her about socialism, Beatie states:

> Socialism isn't talking all the time, it's living, it's singing, it's dancing, it's being interested in what go

> on around you, it's being concerned about people and the world (120).

On her straightforward criticism of the existing traditional system of upbringing and education and on maintaining her own creative views of what education should be, Beatie states:

> Education isn't only books and music-it's asking questions, all the time. There are millions of us, all over the country, and no one, not one of us is asking questions, were all taking the easiest way out (139).

In Roots, part of Wesker's fundamental interest in socialist ideals is related to the choice of language that suits people living in rural communities. He changes the language of the dramatic dialogue. It is no longer the Londoner's language, it is the rustic language of the poor farmers and working class community represented by the Bryants.

Thanks to Ronnie, the metamorphosis of Beatie's character from being unconscious of any social or political ideas to a social and political activist capable of transferring her vital experiences to the members of her family is quite conspicuous in her words directed to her family. In this respect, talking of Ronnie's impact upon Beatie, Best and Cohen state:

> Beatie is his (Ronnie's) challenge and opportunity. He has a chance with her to test his theory of private socialism, she is the first disciple, yet ha never knows how apt and triumphant a pupil Beatie proves to be (232).

It is through Ronnie that Beatie achieves self-discovery. She manages to speak out her thoughts. Towards the end of Roots, Beatie

is no longer quoting Ronnie. The sudden change in her character widens the scope of understanding, change and development. The change in Beatie's character is felt in the language she uses in addressing her family:

> .... I'm tellin' you that the world's bin growing for two thousand years and we havn't noticed it. I'm telling you that we don't know what we are or where we come from. I'm telling you something's cut off from the beginning. I'm telling you we've got no roots .... It's not only the corn that need strong roots, You know it's us too (134).

Providing the audience with a political message at the end of Roots, Beatie, in her dialogue with Mrs Bryant, says:

> I can't Mother, You're right--the apple don't fall far from the tree do it? You're right, I'm like you--stubborn, empty wi'no tools for livin'. I got no roots in nothing. I coma from o'farm Labourers Yet I ent got not roots--just like town people--just a mass o'nothin'.

Beatie manages to realize her own individuality. She becomes capable of expressing herself with her own language. She directs her words to her family saying:

> D'you hear that? D'you hear it? Did you listen to me? I'm talking, Jenny, Frankie, Mother--I'm not quoting no more (138).

Although each part of the trilogy seems to have its own protagonist whose fundamental aim is to achieve the ideal of a socialist society that puts down capitalism, Ronnie represents the

protagonist of the entire trilogy whose role is quite conspicuous both in his own action and in his influence upon other characters.

Talking of the attitude of the Bryants towards Beatie and the transformation in the way she speaks and in the ideas she expresses, Best and Cohen explain:

> The Bryants only tolerate Beatie because she is a Bryant, but her language is utterly foreign to them. It is Beatie's triumph that this language, which is essentially foreign to her, becomes her own at the end of the play. Her achievement is that she has mastered the art of communication at a level of which her family has never been aware. Ronnie has built the bridges for Beatie ... but her family have never felt the need for bridges because they do not realize that there is anything to get across (235).

In I'm talking about Jerusalem, the last part of the trilogy Wesker implemented his Jewish background and its history to create, instead of the promised land of Jerusalem, a socialist ideal land. In this respect, Heinz comments:

> Although he (Wesker) is not a believing Jew, elements of the Messianic dream of the Willennium, which brings salvation on earth, appear everywhere in his plays in company with humanist and socialist conceptions. The essential field of reference to the Promised Land, and also by the expectation of the Messiah, who will bring peace and happiness, abolish injustice and establish a kingdom of God for the chosen People with Jerusalem as its centre (191).

In I'm Talking about Jerusalem, Wesker emphasizes the working classes' confrontations with the capitalist industrial society. His antagonistic attitudes towards capitalism is quite apparent in the words of Ronnie:

> Down with capitalism! Long live the workers' Revolution! You see? And Long live Ronnie Kahn too! (151).

Wesker's quest for a utopia is dramatized in the Simmondse departure from London to live in the country to start a new simple and fresh life, far away from the maddening industrial capitalist society. They attempt to achieve a utopian community of their own, and to find an alternative way of living. In this regard, Heinz states:

> Ada and Dave Simmonds turn their backs on the organized Labour Movement and on, capitalist industrial society established by William Morris, and dedicate themselves to a way of life close to nature. They shun the blessings of modern technology and return to craftsmanship and creative unalientated work (195).

Ada's quest for an ideal socialist society along with Dave is dramatically represented to prove that the utopian ideal is not confined to man, but it extends to include woman too. This point is stressed when Ada, in her dialogue with Libby Dobson, opposes his view that women have no vision. Dobson says, "I hate women because they have no vision" (177). By saying so, Doson deviates from the norm of achieving socialism, thus, betraying the longed for utopia. Also, his condemnation of life in the country emphasizes that point. In his dialogue with Ada, he states:

> The countryside smells like a cow with diarrhoea.
> Perhaps your nose is still full of smoke and petrol
> fumes (171-172).

Ada's and Dave's constant search for a utopia through their attempts to liberate themselves from industrialization is crystallized in their attempt to avoid fragmentation and alienation. This is dramatically represented in their attempt to avoid modern industrial methods and to mainly depend on manual work. Their project comes to failure when Dave's industry cannot compete with modern technology. In this respect, Heinz justifies the protagonists' failure to achieve their utopian ideals on the basis that:

> .... no increase in individual effort can remove their economic inferiority to the capitalist industrial society around them.... Dave's project for an alternative carpenter's workshop forces him to gradual adaptation to industrial methods. Society's immutable hostility along with his failure to get to his handmade furniture to compete successfully with industrial products, at last exhaust the outsider's resistance (195).

The real trouble with the Simmondses seems to be associated, not just with their fight against capitalist industrial communities, but also with the negative and frustrating attidudes of the family members who seems indifferent to their situation. In his treatment of characters in I'm Talking about Jerusalem, Heinz states :

> The insuperable problem and enormous misunderstanding which weight down upon Ada's and Dave's attempt to build themselves a utopian

> island of their own become evident in the isolation even within their family. The objects to their enterprise range from non-understanding of their renunciation of electricity, water on tap, and asphalt roads, to their mothers' more fundamental criticism of their escapism into an "ivory tower" outside Labour Movement (195).

In addition to the indifferent attitude of the Kahns towards Ada's and Dave's search for utopia, there is Dobson's pessimistic and offensive attitude towards them. His cynicism is quite obvious in his dialogue with the Simmondses :

DOBSON : There's nothing more pathetic than the laughter of people who have lost their pet faith. The laughter is dead. That was bomb.

DAVE : What the hell is the matter with you Libby? Within a few minutes you've called us idealists as if you were swearing at us, and then you express disgust because you think we've lost our faith.

ADA : Let's have some of your wine shall we ?

DOBSON: Yes, Let's.

DAVE: You're being offensive Libby.

DOBSON: ...... There's nothing wrong with idealism, only when it's soft and floppy. The smell of petrol in my nose ! So What ! you can't change the world because it smells. of petorl (172 – 173).

Ada's and Dave's failure to achieve their utopian socialist ideals is not only due to Wesker's incapability to adapt the nineteenth

century socialist ideals to the twentieth century mind, but it also results from the characters' inability to realize higher levels of consciousness. In this regard, Heinz pinpoints the weaknesses of the main characters :

> Dave Simmonds himself still lacks the necessary moral maturity for the enterprise as is illustrated by the theft episode. Libby Dobson's verdict on the majority of human society is categorical : their egotism and addiction to profit debase human relationships. This makes them unfit for utopia. Dobson even mistakes his problems with the other sex for a confirmation of his negative view of humanity (196).

To emphasize Dobson's betrayal and sacrifice of the utopian ideal, it is significant to quote his words with the Simmondses about Jerusalem which metaphorically stands for the utopian society they crave for :

DOBSON : You want Jerusalem ? order it with an iron-hand no questions, no speeches for and against-bang! It's there ! You don't understand it ? (175).

Comparing the attitudes of the other characters towards Ada's and Dave's withdrawal from London to live in the country Best and Cohen state :

> They (Ada and Dave) see their experiment as a positive attempt to put socialism into practice. Sarah and Ronie see it as a retreat from political and human commitment. Dave's New Jerusalem however has more powerful enemies than Ada's

> family. Libby Dobson points out that the William Morris ideal is illogical and dishonest (239).

These attitudes are dramatically represented in the words of Sarah and Ada :

> SARAH : What's wrong with socialism that you have to run to an ivory tower ?
>
> ADA : Nothing wrong with socialism, Sarah, only we want to live it-not talk about it. (154).

Imbued with their Jewish background, the characters in the trilogy carry out discussions that have to do with Chiliastic concepts included in the Old Testament. Wesker oriented the Jews and their wandering for the new Jerusalem to the protagonists quest for a utopia.

In his arguments of characters, Heinz stresses that point :

> The socialist ideal is related to the vision of the prophets. It is given roots in Jewish traditions, in the myth and the faith of Dave's ancestors. The connections with the realm of the transcendental explain both its eschatological features and its strong emotional implications (197).

Wesker's adherence to the Old Testament is quite obvious in Dave's inspiration by it and by the prophets who struggled against temptations :

> DAVE : Prophet Dave Simmonds, me. With a chisel. Dave Simmonds and Jesus Christ—Two yiddisha boy-(200).

However, Dave, like the other main characters in the trilogy, suffers from disillusionment for their inability to achieve their utopian deals on an actual human basis. Therefore, Dave decides to go back to

London. He seems to be convinced that, though he failed, he at least tried to implement his vision. In this respect, Best and Cohen explain :

> Dave finds his vision increasingly difficult to preserve. As the prophet of a way of life which becomes unreal and disappointing, he must continually lower his sights. England's land has proved neither green nor pleasant... The cottage is kept for holidays (239).

Thus, Wesker managed to establish a link between his utopian thought and his idea of a socialist society. It is true that he adopted the working class problems in an attempt to establish their own culture, with the purpose of liberating them from exploitation and poverty, but at the same time, he focuses on their aspirations for achieving their utopian ideals of a socialist society unbound by any social or political restrictions that mar their practice of freedom, democracy and justice.

The Chicken Soup Trilogy is a kind of revolt against the bureaucratic system of the Welfare State which, once established, it sacrificed the socialist ideals. Wesker's emphasis on the inevitability of establishing a link between utopian thought and alternative community is stressed by Dennis Hardy :

> The notion of community in utopian thought is ... nourished by a vague but persisting recollection of a past Golden Age, a Garden of Eden of material abundance and natural beauty, separated in time and space from the realities of common life. In English social history this is often intermingled with a nostalgic reminiscence of rustic harmony, and of village life in particular with successive generations idealising their faded memories of rural background (3).

# Chapter IV
# The Image In Drama

According to J.A. Cuddon's A Dictionary of Literary Terms "The terms image and imagery have connotations and meanings". As a general term, "imagery", says Cuddon, "covers the usage of language to represent objects, actions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, states of mind and any sensory or extra-sensory experience" (1982 – 322).

As a representation of certain feelings and states of mind, the dramatic function of the image in drama is the subject of this chapter, which deals with the image of the sea in Ibsen's The Lady from the Sea and Eugene O'Neill's Anne Christie.

This chapter tackles the dramatic function of the image in drama with particular reference to the image of the sea in Ibsen's The Ledy in from the sea and Eugune O'Neill's Anna Christie.

The image of the sea, employed as a line of demarcation that catalizes the characters' ambivalent attitudes towards the sea due to their inner fears, hallucinations and idleness, is represented to convey the dramatists' Weltanschauung as to various social and philosophical issues. In her article "The Varying Image of The Sea in Eugene O'Neill's One-Act Sea Plays (1913-1918)", Mona Abousenna elucidates the potentials of the image in drama. She writes:

> The image in the drama acquires many dimensions. For it acts as a unifying element in the sense that it could be used to create a mood, reveal character, act as a device for conducting arguments or lines of thought that are

> otherwise not easily developed. The image helps to bring out the visual and the verbal aspects which embody the dual nature of drama (1990, 1).

The dramatic image of the sea with its visual and verbal dimensions is implemented to reveal the bitter physical experience of a character, to trace the psychological landscape of a character's unconscious such as Arnholm and Ellida in The Lady From The Sea and to unravel the character's ways of thinking and their moods in behaviour encompassed in their wavering between the sea's irresistible attraction and the inevitable refusal of its foggy mysterious power. Examples of such characters are Chris, Anna and Burke in Anna Christie.

In his book Life of Ibsen, Koht traces the strong impact of the sea upon Ibsen's mood, his connections with people and how his life experiences helped a great deal in moulding his dramatic characters. Quoting Ibsen's first notes to The Lady From The Sea, Koht maintains that "the sea possesses a power over one's moods that has the effect of a conscious will. The sea can hypnotize. So can nature in general" (1971, 382). Accordingly, the sea symbolizes all that go beyond man's conscious will. Koht elucidates:

> ...the sea became the symbol of all that drew human beings with the power of the unconscious. The sea could come to life, staring at one with eyes almost human, it was a symbol of all that lay beyond conscious will (383).

The Lady From The Sea is Ibsen's dramatic output of two summer journeys: one at Molde in Norway in 1885 where he "began to understand", says Koht, "all the secret passions that stirred beneath the surface in man that he saw the sea as a potential symbol" (378), and the

second journey was at Saeby in Denmark where "he could see the ocean in storm" (379). In addition to Ibsen's sea life experiences and their dramatic significance in his plays, there are some family members in the background of his delineation of characters in The Lady From The Sea.

The Lady From The Sea, an Ibsenic extraordinary captivating sea drama, traces the socio-psychological development of an idle, less educated and less emotionally disciplined lady, Ellida Wangel. The drama revels her alternative fascination with and refusal of the sea where she used to live near it when she was young as her father worked as a lighthouse keeper. After composing The Lady From The Sea, Koht quotes Ibsen saying to his publisher: "I fell confident that this play will win the attention of the public. In many respects, I have entered a new path here" (386). This phrase "new path here" implies that unlike The Wild Duck, for instance, The Lady From The Sea portrays Ibsen's newly formulated anti-pessimistic attitude. The play is also devoid of any Ibseneseque polemical spirit.

The Lady From The Sea marks the psychological liberation of Ellida Wangel who was lured by the attractive and mysterious power of the sea personified in the character of The Stranger who first calls himself "friman" and then signed as Alfred Johnston. His eyes resemble the eyes of fish. The play probes deep down into the inner self of Ellida to reveal the symptoms of her darkened tone and diseased soul. The sea with its double visual and verbal aspects catalizes Ellida's inward fears, hallucination and interior inertia.

"To acclimatize oneself" to the prevalent existing conditions is, according to Ibsen, a way out for man to release the self from its prison. Ellida releases herself from the prison she lives in through acclimatization. Though she did not come to Wangel's house with her

own free will, she accepts her condition and manages through free choice to adapt herself to live with Wangel. Her inner malaise which is, in a sense a representation of the turbulent situation of the human condition is externalized in her own words.

> Ellida (in a low imploring tone). Oh, Wangel, save me from myself!
> Wangel (looks anxiously at her). Ellida. I feel there is something behind this -
> Ellida. There is - the temptation !
> Wangel. Temptation?
> Ellida. That man is like the sea! (210).

W.H. Auden highlights the nature of life in the land and the sea which, in a sense, reveals Ellida's motivations to release herself from the cares of social life in land and liberate herself from the circular way of living through leading one ultimate free way represented by the sea. Quoting Auden, Durbach writes:

> Land is the place where people are born, marry, and have children, the world where the changing seasons create a round of different duties and feelings, and the ocean by contrast is the place where there are no ties of home or sex... so that to leave land and put out to sea can signify the freeing of the spirit from finite nature, its ascetic denial of the flesh, the determination to live in one-direction historical time rather than in cyclical natural time (157).

Standing as a metaphor of the self, the sea motivates Ellida to bathe everyday in the fjord. Symbolically, the sea is an instrument of terror and attraction. The death of Ellida's child whose blue eyes

resemble the colour of the sea, symbolizes the inability of sea creatures to acclimatize and adapt as land creatures. Bolitte's attitude towards the sea sheds light on this symbol. She states:

> ....I think we live very much like the carp down there in the pond on. They have the fiord so near them where the shoals of wild fishes pass in and out. But the poor, tame domestic fishes known nothing, and they can never join (199-200).

Bolitte's realization of life in the sea and her consciousness of its environmental components is emphasized in the following dialogue between Arnholm and her stepmother. Ellida:

> Arnholm....We've once and for all taken the wrong turning, and have become land beasts instead of sea beasts....
>
> Ellida. Yes, you've spoken a sad truth. And I think men instinctively feel something of this themselves. They carry like a secret regret and sorrow (203).

As The Lady From The Sea proceeds, one might observe the psychological development of Ellida from her apathetic psychological conditions to an active state via her free and responsible choice to liberate herself from the bond of the sea, and to live, though socially bound, a secure life with Wangel.

It is Ellida that "would feel the hypnotic power", says Koht, "latent in the sea and struggle against it" (384). And in tracing the major sources of Ellida's character, Koht writes:

> Inspiration for the play's main character came in part from his (Ibsen's) own mother-in-law, Magdalene Thoresen, a woman closely bound to the sea. She had spent her childhood by the peaceful Little Belt on the Jutland coast; when she came to Norway at twenty-three to marry a minister in SunnmØre, she found a counterpart to her own tempestuous nature in the landscape of her adopted country. But only when she discovered the sea....She could not stand to live far from it, and even in old age she had to swim out to the waves each day (384).

Mrs. Thoresen "was tormented throughout her life", says Koht, "by the conflicting demands of the old and the new love. The longing for the sea that Ibsen had seen became a symbol of the longing all men have for the hidden and the mysterious" (385). Many of Ellida's personal traits are drawn from Mrs. Thoresen and Ellida was first called Thora. Later her name was changed to Ellida" from the romantic saga of Fridtjof the Bold", says Koht, "where Ellidi is the (masculine) name of the hero's ship, which is almost a living creature, a child of storm and magic" (384).

Another source of inspiration for Ibsen's delineation of his heroine is connected with "a young girl", says Koht that "had longed to become a writer and escape to a fuller, freer life, but shot herself all the age of twenty-one" (385). Ibsen later investigates that tragic event. He even "inquired closely about her", Koht elaborates", visited her home, looked at pictures of her, went to her grave, and even read the books she had owned. It was the sea, he felt, that had inspired her longing for the unattainable" (385).

Although the Danish landscape provided Ibsen with his living characters, he "believed", Koht relates, "that there was something peculiarly Norwegian in this reaction to the sea" (385). The sea, for Ibsen, manages via its hypnotic and attractive power to sap the Norwegians' wills and to mar their capability of free thinking. At the time of writing The Lady From The Sea, Ibsen, quoted by Koht, said to a German friend that "people in Norway are spiritually under the domination of the sea. I don't think other people can really understand this" (385).

Ellida's connections with The Stranger, who stands for the irresistable attractive power of the sea, had its roots in a story Ibsen "had heard in Molde from a Nordland woman" (385) who told Ibsen the story, says Koht of "a Finn who used the magic power of his eyes to entice a clergyman's wife away from husband, children, and home. This is related to another tale told by Koht about "a sailor who had gone far for so many years that he was given up for dead. When he returned, he found his wife remarried" (385).

In her struggle to break off her engagement with The Stranger, Ellida's aim is not just to liberate herself from the social fetters imposed upon her, but essentially the "contest", Koht maintains, "for full mastery of the unconscious forces of the soul" (385). In a last traumatic confrontation with The Stranger in Act 5, Ellida relieves the worst of her fears and temptations. Finally, Wangel offers Ellida the opportunity to have a responsible free choice. Freedom in choice enables Ellida to address The Stranger saying:

> To me you are like a dead man-who has come home
> from the sea, and who returns to it again (240).

The Ibsenic incarnation of man's contradictory needs between what is human and what is superhuman, between his being as a land creature and his aspiration to become a sea creature is related to Ibsen's adherence to the Darwinists who believe that the sea is the natural locale of all creation. Ibsen's awareness of Darwin's theory of evolution is reflected in his delineation of characters. In this respect, Rosengarten states:

> Poised between the past and the future of the race, she (Ellida) must make the decision that will mean...evolutionary progress. There is much about Ellida that marks her as a fulcrum. Her obvious identification with Ballested's mermaid - she suggested it to him as a subject for his picture - stresses her biologically transitional nature (464-5).

To establish a link between biological and moral values, The Stranger can symbolically stand for life in the earliest primitive stage of progress. He "clearly comes from the sea", says Rosengarten, "the locale of creation according to evolutionists" (465). While Dr. Wangel represents the highest level of man's evolution. The Stranger stands for the lowest level in the process of evolution. On the other hand, Ellida is presented as "representative", says Rosengarten, "of a decisive moment in the process of evolution" (464). When asked by Arnholm if human beings are land creatures, Ellida states:

> ...I think that if only men had accustomed themselves from the beginning to live on the sea, or in the sea perhaps, we should be more perfect than we are - both better and happier (203).

"Acclimatization,", a notion which is occasionally stressed in The Lady From The Sea, ensures the Darwinists' concept of evolution in that "when the hostile environment changes", Rosengarten elaborates, "the organism must adapt....Adaptability is a prerequisite for acclimatization: one who is adaptable has the potential to become acclimatized, one who has become acclimatized has adapted to a specific environment" (469). Ellida succeeded in the end to adapt herself to the new conditions. Her acceptance of living with Wangel is based on her acclimatization achieved through free choice governed by responsibility.

The development of the character of the Stranger from an unfamiliar indefinite character whose name is not known to a familiar definite one marks a new stage in the process of evolution. According to Ibsen, The Stranger is a symbol of everywhere and nowhere. Rosengarten describes him as follows:

> The Stranger possesses no name. Moreover, he, to a greater extent even than Ballested, is associated in the play with a multiplicity of nationalities. The effect is to mark him as some sort of prehistoric citizen of the world (470).

The modernity of The Lady From The Sea lies in its close connection with the modern psychological theories in that it touches upon the subconscious activity of the human mind. According to Koht the drama acquired a new meaning because psychopathologists focused on man's mental activity to investigate "various kinds of border conditions", says Koht, "between the conscious and the unconscious life" (388). Koht concludes that conflict in the drama is not "over moral

viewpoints...but a soul struggling with itself...the conflict was one individual effort to gain mastery over his own soul" (387).

The Lady From The Sea, unlike Ibsen's previous plays tackles the subject of marriage to discuss issues of highly philosphical and psychological implications. To emphasize that focal point, Koht argues:

> ...although marriage was not the only condition where issues of psychological compulsion and free choice arose, it was the one that produced the greatest dramatic conflicts and was the crucial testing ground of the will's capacity to free itself and become fully realized (389).

The play pictures the psychological conditions of Ellida who found herself bound and her will shackled because she got married to a man she did not love. Their marriage was a sort of commercial enterprise. She "feels cut off from the real source of her being, the sea;" says Orley, "she is alienated in her new home. Insofar as she has no task to perform and she has no communication with her step daughters or her husband, she feels useless and a prisoner of the bargain she has made in marrying Wangel" (73). However, marrying Wangel which, according to Ellida, means selling herself is not the real cause of her alienation and imprisonment. "Imprisonment", Orley maintains, "is the condition of the whole community and household as Boletta makes clear with her metaphor of the carp Bond" (73).

Crucial to Ellida's consciousness of her psychological status and her recovery is her awareness of her social reality in that "when you become a land-creature", says Ellida, you can no longer find your way back again to the sea, nor to the sea life either" (241). Offering Ellida the opportunity to search for the symptoms of her diseased soul via free

choice governed by responsibility shows Ibsen's adherence to Kierkegaard who believed as Koht asserts, "how the diseased soul could be saved by being faced with the necessity for choice. The basic idea of Either/Or was to force man to the crossroads" (389). The moment man becomes capable of liberating himself from the fetters of his darkened unconscious through free choice is the real moment of liberation from the circular prison of the self.

The impact of the sea on Ellida's character since her childhood is quite apparent in her affinity with it as the following dialogue sustains:

> Arnholm...I mostly met her when I went to the lighthouse to see her father.
>
> Wangel. Those times out there, believe me, have set their mark upon her. The people in the town here can't understand her at all. They call her the "Lady from the Sea" (174-5).

The impact of the sea is not confined to the character of Ellida, but it extends to include other characters. Lyngstrand, for instance, narrates his story during his journey through the English Channel back home and how the ship was wrecked to be left in ice-cold water for a long time. In his dialogue with Arnholm, Lyngstrand expresses his bitter experience in the sea when after his mother's death, his father sent him, though he did not like to go, through the sea.

> Lyngstrand....When mother died, father wouldn't have me knocking about at home any longer, and so he sent me to sea. Then we were wrecked in the English Channel on our way home; and that was very fortunate for me.

Arnholm. How did you make that out?

Lyngstrand. Well, it was in the shipwreck that I got this little weakness - of my chest. I was so long in the ice-cold water before they picked me up; and so I had to give up the sea. And that was very fortunate (180).

Thus, the malignant dark force of the sea tremendously affects Arnholm's! health conditions. Another negative influence of the sea is obvious in Ellida's acute depression that drove her into heavy drinking and living on a drug that Wangel always gives to her. Wangel attempts to invetigate the symptoms of Ellida's disease. He invites Arnholm, an old friend and a former teacher of Ellida to reveal the reality of Ellida's disease. "Arnholm's arrival in Act I", says David Thomas, "has the desired effect of breaking up this destructive stasis, as Ellida begins to reveal to him some of her secret worries" (84).

In her confession of her deeply repressed feeling, Ellida disappoints her husband by saying that she neither psychologically nor socially feels that sense of belonging to Wangel's house. This is, according to Robert Raphael, due to the absence of empathy that should exist between them" (129). For this reason, Ellida asks Wangel to offer her the opportunity to reconsider the nature of their married relationship and take a decision either to stay or to leave to confront her unknown future with The Stranger. But being her husband, Wangel insists that he should protect her and must choose for her. However, after his gradual realization of her own character and her motivations, Wangel provides Ellida the opportunity to decide. After giving her freedom to choose and decide, Ellida "not only turns from the sea to Wangel", Raphael states, "she also firmly renounces it" (130). Wangel addresses Ellida saying:

> ...you are completely free of me and mine. Now your own true life may resume its real bent again, for now you can choose of your own free will, and on your own responsibility, Ellida (239).

Wangel gradually becomes conscious of Ellida's real character. In his dialogue with Ellida, Wangel states:

> You think and conceive in pictures - in visible pictures. Your longing and aching for the sea, your attraction towards this strange man, these were the expression of an awakening and growing desire for freedom - nothing else (240).

Realizing the psychological development of Ellida's character, Wangel says:

> Ellida, your mind is like the sea - it ebbs and flows. Why this change? (240).

In reply, Ellida says:

> ...don't you understand that the change came-was bound to come when I could choose in freedom? (240).

A great deal of Ellida's sense of isolation and alienation is due to her dissociation from the sea which formulated the roots of her social upbringing where her father worked as a lighthouse keeper in the small village at the head of the fjord. Another reason for Ellida's sense of isolation that leads to her acute depression is connected with her life in Wangel's house. To elaborate that point, Orley writes:

> ...she (Ellida) has no real task in the Wangel's household since Boletta manages the domestic duties and Ellida

> does not feel old enough to act as a stepmother to the young girls - even if they wanted her to function in that role...She seems to have little communication with her husband. In short...Ellida is alienated - she is cut off from her natural element, from any meaningful task in life, even from the people who surround her (67).

The Stranger was the second mate of an American ship. He confessed to Ellida that he killed the captain and had to flee promising her to come back to marry her. With his second coming, the drama begins to diverge from the form of a purely psychological play to treat social themes. To stress the peculiarity of his character in theatrical production, producers of the play have always put the lights down in a way that can not make the audiences have a clear look at him.

Various associations that relate Ellida to the sea are recurrently stressed throughout The Lady From The Sea. We first see Ballested talking about the picture of the half-dead mermaid symbolically suggestive of Ellida's miserable psychological conditions (174-175). Ellida is also named "the lady from the sea by the people of the town. Arnoholm addresses Ellida saying:" I rather think, Mrs. Wangel, that you have a peculiar relation to the sea, and to everything that belongs to it" (175). He proceeds to tell her that "her father had named (her) after an old ship" (176). When talking with Bolletta about their step mother, Hilde refers to her as "The Lady From the Sea" walking a long and chatting with him (meaning her father Wangel)" (188).

In a dialogue with Wangel, Ellida stresses the irresistable attraction of the sea when she admits, "Night and day, winter and summer, it weights upon me - this irresistable homesickness for the sea" (190).

Towards the end of The Lady From The Sea, Ballested differentiates between the case of the mermaid in his suggested picture and the humans by saying:

> Ballested: Only with this difference - that the mermaid dies of it, while human beings can acclam. - acclimatize themselves. Yes, yes. I assume you Mrs. Wangel, they can ac-climatize themselves (242).

The image of the sea is remarkably recurring there in Eugune O'Neill's Anna Christie which depicts his self-divided vision due to diverse social, philosophical and cultural sources. These sources which include Western and Oriental thought nurtured the O'Neillian intellectual background. While O'Neill focuses on conflict as a tool of the character's involvement in dramatic action which is typically Western, he relies heavily upon Oriental impersonal spiritual forces that go far beyond the familiar and the known. The Eastern mysterious forces enlightened O'Neill's dynamic vision of the world reflected in his portrayal of characters. He obtained his ideas about the East either from his wide readings about Orient religions or by travelling to the East. O'Neill actually began his study of Oriental philosophy at the time he was about to finish writing Anna Christie. This play, unlike his early sea plays, shows a positive change as to the O'Neillian attitude towards the sea. It manifests his constant search for union with the sea.

Essential to the treatment of the image of the sea in Anna Christie which ensures that the sea was the focal point in O'Neill's mind is to refer to the play in its two former unpublished manuscripts found in Library of Congress. The first was "Chris Christopherson" a play in six

scenes (1920) and the second was "The Ole Davil", a play in four acts (1920). In both manuscripts, the sea is the central metaphor.

Just as in his early sea plays, in Anna Christie, the O'Neillian vision of the world is projected via the image of the sea which appears as a dominant recurring aspect sometimes acting as a symbol of life in all its awful and mysterious complexities, at other times, as a giver of life and happiness. However, unlike O'Neill's early sea plays which encompass the persistent struggle against the mysterious and dominating power of the sea, Anna Christie reflects O'Neill's longing for achieving reunion with the sea. His yearning for reconciliation with the sea reveals his sense of acceptance based on his realization that there are fatal and blind forces which transcend man's capacity to comprehend, hence submitting to it is the only alternative for survival and for the continuity of life.

Anna Christie reveals O'Neill's profound interest and omnivorous readings in Oriental thought for he began to read volumes in Indian philosophy at the time he was about to finish Anna Christie. O'Neill was quite conscious of Oriental religions termed as Brahaman by Vedantic Hindus, Nirvana by Buddhaists and Tao by Chinese. These three ways stress the point that the sea, as a malignant blind force, is beyond man's rational faculties. O'Neill is also influenced by the Eastern concept of time characterized by its circularity. In this respect, James A. Robinson elucidates the influence of Hinduism on O'Neill's Anna Christie. He states:

> His (O'Neill's) treatment of the sea in Anna Christie...demonstrates interesting parallels to the pantheistic monism of Vedanta. On the one hand exists Anna's desire to merge with the ocean, which she regards

> as a deeper Self; On the other hand is Chris's unwillingnes to trust "that Ole davil", which has often worn the deceptive veil of maya (1982, 16-17).

Sources of O'Neill's intellectual and philosophical background are not confined to Oriental philosophy for he also shows his adherence to such Western writers and thinkers as Emerson, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Jung. He was also introduced to Indian philosophy by his close friend Terry Carlin and later by his third wife Caroletta Monterey who introduced him to Chinese thought.

In his article "Strindberg and O'Neill", Murray Hartman traces the Strindbergian influence upon O'Neill's plays and refers to O'Neill's review of The Spook Sonata which is considered as one of the most difficult of "Strindberg's behind life" (216). In a letter from Strindberg's second wife Frida to O'Neill, quoted by Hartman, the lady writes: "To Eugene O'Neill Our American Son and Spiritual heir of August Strindberg" (217). These words imply the similarity of O'Neill's and Strindberg's intellectual background which, according to Hartman, "included the pessimist Schopenhauer, Nietzsche the alienated pagan "superman". Ibsen, the social realist and Maesterlink, the mystic poet" (217). In the message of his acceptance of Nobel Prize in 1936 which was quoted by Hartman, O'Neill admitted that "it was reading his (Strindberg's) plays when I first started to write (at twenty-five)...that, above all else, first gave me the vision of what modern drama could be, and first inspired me to write for the theatre myself" (216).

As an ironical life force, the sea reveals O'Neill's realization that a complete image and a total understanding of the sea is not reachable through any sort of epistemology. His change of the title of Anna Christie from "Chris Christopherson" to the present title shows O'Neill's

profound interest in the sea stressed in one of his letters to Caroletta. Quoted by Robinson O'Neill writes: "The sea is a woman to me" (94). The present title also emphasizes the notion that Anna is the centre of dramatic action. Anna, according to Skinner, is "the first feminine character to dominate completely an O'Neill play (77). Skinner traces the circumstances of Anna's social upbringing which, in many respects, resembles Ellida's upbringing near the sea. Skinner writes:

> Anna is a daughter of the sea to whom the touch of the land is fatal. Her father, once a sea man, but now the captain of a coal barge, sent her as a child to live with relatives on a farm in Minnesota. Growing up with her boy cousins in the farm...she became in time the victim of their passions, fled to the city where she worked as a nurse girl, only to have further bitter experiences with the men of the family. In time she became an inmate of a house of prostitution. At last, after an illness, she writes to her father in New York, thinking him to be the Janitor of a large building (77).

Anna Christie ensures O'Neill's positive attitude towards the sea as a major source of man's hopes. Like Robert Mayo in Beyond The Horizon who longs for the sea as a source of hope and Edmund Tyrone in Long Day's Journey Into Night who realizes that the moment of being possessed by the sea is a moment of goodness to man, in taking a Journey on the barge, Anna finds in the quiet foggy sea a kind of peace and feels a sense of power. This is connected with O'Neill's conviction that everything is controlled by a certain force of which the sea is one which always dominates man's destiny. Accordingly, characters in Anna Christie surrender in the end to the mysterious forces operating upon

them by the sea. They also have different attitudes towards the power of the sea. While "the sea", says Skinner, "holds the will of God for Burke, who knows its hardships without fear; the sea becomes the will of the devil for Chris, who yields to its dominion in fascinated fear" (81).

To dramatize Chris's constant struggle with "dat Ole davil, sea", O'Neill involves Matt Burke, the Irish sailor, in a love affair with Anna which terminates in his immediate decision to marry her. Burke's proposal of marriage is strongly rejected by Chris, for he does not want his daughter to face the same fate of the Christoperasons. Anna Christie, in a sense, resembles Greek tragedy in connection with the notion of fate. "A family curse; emanating from the sea", says Robinson, "seems to lie on the Christopherson clan. Chris's father, brothers and son have all left home to become sailors and nearly all have died on the water" (95). Robinson stresses the similarity between Anna and Oedipus. Like Oedipus, Anna finds hereslf in another land brought up in a Minnesota farm where her father believes that "she don't know that Ole davil, sea". Also, like Oedipus, Anna rejoins her remaining parent and discovers her identity, as a daughter of the sea" (95).

Anna's psychological salvation is fulfilled via cleaning herself with sea water, symbol of redemption. The result is a reciprocal understanding between Anna and Chris which develops to include Chris's sense of acceptance. Hence, Chris's reconciliation with the sea which turns to be a reality. He shows that the sea, whether Chris accepts or not, controls man's destiny.

Fog stands as a symbol of the blind force of the sea baffling man's persistent attempts to recognize the bleak reality of the sea tricks. Of the fog symbol and its malignant purpose against characters in Anna Christie, Whitman states:

> ...from Chris' point of view it (fog) still symbolizes a force which baffles his will, and renders his hopes impotent. But it is made perfectly evident in the action of the play that his recriminations against the sea and the fog are simply rationalization of his own inadequecies, his justification of his fear of life and failure as a man. They become, therefore, without losing any of the mystery or sense of inevitability which we associate with the sea, projections of forces at work within Chris himself (157).

Chris's dilemma is due to his inability to reconcile the physical and the moral issues in his life. In his introduction to Anna Christie, Lionel Trilling emphasizes the theme of death stating that it is a dominant theme nearly in all of O'Neill's dramas. According to Trilling, most of us are "positivists in our philosophy, and to the positivist the intellect is the instrument which can and must control the blind instincts" (xv). The intellect guides the positivist to realize "that the problems which press in upon us", says Trilling, "are those of how to organize the physical and moral means of existence and to make us close our eyes to death and the ultimate questions which death suggests" (xv).

O'Neill adopts an anti-positivistic philosophical frame of reference in Anna Christie to drive the point home that in order to control our living conditions, we should disregard the haunting image of death for which the sea, in a sense, stands as a metaphor and to control our blind instincts of life, a notion which haunts Chris throughout the drama.

Chris' antagonistic feelings towards the sea is, in the end, mixed up with a sense of acceptance and surrender and a continuous lament on

his miserable conditions associated with his former bitter sea experiences. He ends up the drama by saying:

> Fog, fog, fog, all bloody time. You can't see where you vas going, no. Only date ole davil, sea - she knows! (179).

This metaphoric image of the foggy sea has a metaphysical depth connected with the impossibility of having a total understanding of the secrets of the sea. Thus, unlike O'Neill's vision in his early sea plays where he focused on the physical aspects of the sea, in Anna Christie, it turns to be much more physical and metaphysical. The image of the foggy sea forces characters to surrender to its blind malignant force. The foggy sea stands in an ironical situation. While the fog attracts Burke to the beautiful woman Anna and consequently, they got married, it offers Anna freedom by taking Burke to sail far away to leave her behind.

Thus, in Anna Christie, O'Neill manages via the image of the sea to deepen his philosophical concept of the modern man's predicament of which the early sea plays lack. In this connection, Mona Abousenna who tackled the varying image of the sea in O'Neill's early sea one-act plays concluded that:

> With time, O'Neill's artistic world grew more complex; his vision took on the philosophical depth which his first sea plays lacked. However, the basic image of the sea both as an infernal and purgatorial element remained throughout his dramatic output and acquired a metaphoric depth particularly in Anna Christie when it became interwinded with the image of the fog (25).

Anna, like Ellida, was born near the sea and it is inevitable for her to go back to her roots. As in The Lady From The Sea, in Anna Christie conflict rotates round people who belong to the sea and they are destroyed by land creatures. It stresses the positive role of the sea in reconciling land creatures with sea creatures. Tracing conflict in Anna Christie, Richard Diana Skinner writes:

> Anna Christie, is actually the story of five conflicting forces - of the destruction wrought by the land to those who belong to the sea, of the sea as a cleansing spirit to those who accept it bravely, as a she devil of possession to those who love it inordinately and with fear, of the man and woman, each injured in a way but made for each other, and of the father who is jealous of the claim the sea has laid upon his own. Burke loves the ideal he has made for Anna. Anna is afraid to confess what the land has done to her (81-82).

Unlike Ellida in The Lady From the Sea who managed to dissociate herself from the strong bond of the sea and do away with its irresistable hypnotic power via choosing freely her future life in land, Anna, in Anna Christie withdraws from life in land despite her father's constant resistance to her attachment to the sea. She chooses to marry Burke who, immediately after, signs to sail in the Londondery the same ship Chris signed to sail in. Being astonished for this irony which stresses his inevitable fate connected with the sea, Chris states:

> It's queer, yes - you and me shipping on same boat dat vay. It ain't right. Ay don't know - it's dat funny vay ole davil sea do her vorst dirty tricks, yes, it's so (178).

Unlike Ellida who asks Wangel to offer her the opportunity to choose her future life with her own free will controlled by responsibility, to live a social life in land with him, Anna, trapped in a metaphysical power that governs the human condition where man has no hand in what has been done to him, accepts her fate. In her dialogue with Chris, Anna says:

> ...There ain't nothing to forgive, anyway. It ain't your fault, and it ain't mine, and it ain't his neither. We're all poor nuts, and things happen! and we yust get mixed in wrong, that's all (158).

Thus, although Ibsen's The Lady From The Sea (1888) and O'Neill's Anna Christie (1922) belong to two different historical and cultural backgrounds: The European and the American, they adopt as to their dramatic, social and philosophical goals the image of the sea as a unifying dramatic force that expresses the two playwrights' vision of the world. They transmute the physical image of the sea into a symbol which stands as a metaphor of life with its perplexities and ambiguities.

# Conclusion

Conflictual issues which represent the very core of dramatic writings, are treated via discussing the inseparability of form and meaning in drama with the aim of producing the required dramatic effect.

While popular forms in community drama are discussed to point out certain problematics connected with politics, education, the arts and culture in general, expressionist theatrical devices are treated in connection with the socio-economic and political changes that have taken place during the 1920's and the 1940's that remarkably affected the American theatre. Expressionism came as a representation of the dramatist's refrain from realism for it is connected with man's objective reality, discarding his inner life.

As an ontological and dramatic form of expression, silence is treated as language, not as a mere space between words or dramatic pauses that take place between one scene and another. Silence is implemented to reveal the enigmatic world of the playwrights. Since it represents the centrality of both Beckett's and Pinter's dramatic world, silence uncovers the metaphysical as well as the social dimensions of anguish at the absurdity of the human situation and the futile attempts of man to find the right routes towards a meaningfull concept of existence. This is done through the dramatists' use of open roads and small rooms which provides the sense of being entrapped which uncovers, via a journey through the self, the inner psyche of characters.

It has also been concluded that farce as a drama form which has been historically distorted and underestimated is applied in modern

drama to a full-length drama which hinges on absurdization of man's follies and social eccentricities. It also deals with such marital crises as troubled sexual relations and family quarrels.

Also, theatrical technical forms that relate to utopian literature are discussed to point the theoretical signification of the dramatic usage of such devices as flashbacks versus flashforwards, debates, running jumps into the future, off-stage narrative events, symbols and memory. This is practically done in connection with Arnold Wesker's vision of utopia shown in his Chicken Soup Trilogy, where he warns people against fragmentation and propagates unity, not only in the arts but also in life in general. Wesker argues that alternative communities could be adopted as expedients of utopia.

Essential to the implementation of particular dramatic images is its acquisition of multifaceted dimensions of meanings. Due to its visual and verbal dimensions, the image of the sea is discussed to conclude that the psychological landscape of the character's unconscious in Ibsen's and O'Neill's plays in question, is revealed through the characters' wavering between the sea's unconquerable attraction and the inevitable rejection of its foggy and enigmatic nature.

While the sea catalizes the Victorian world picture in the Ibsenesque theatrical world which essentially focuses on man's vacillation, due to his contradictory needs, between what is human and what is super human, the enigmatic image of the sea reveals O'Neill's *Weltanschauung,* which concludes that a thorough image and a total realization and understanding of the sea is something unattainable which, in many respects, stands for the centrality of the image of woman in his plays.

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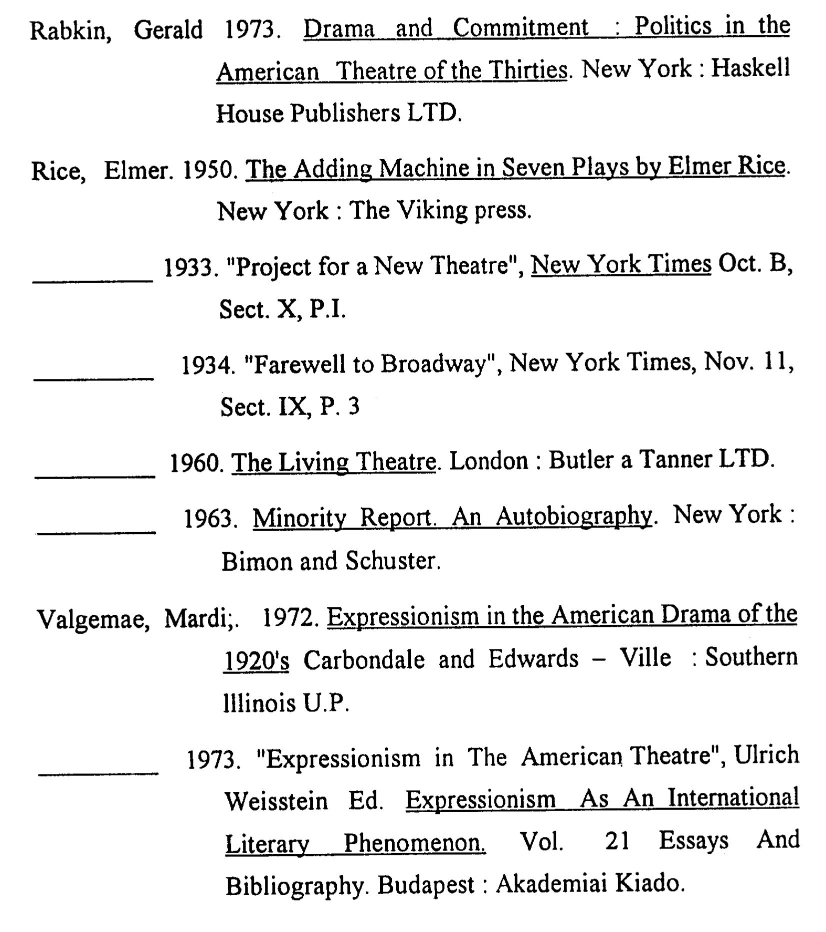
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